

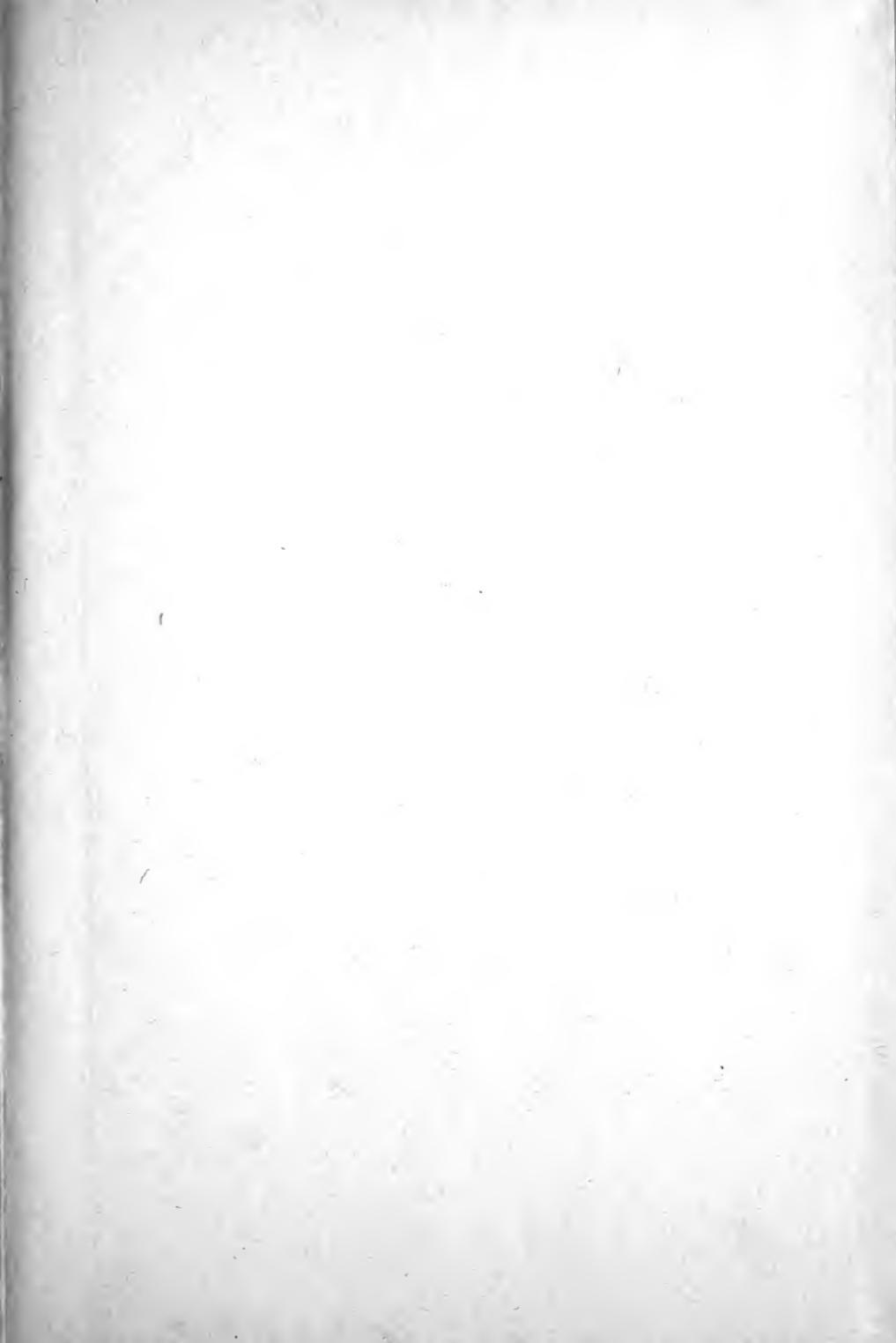
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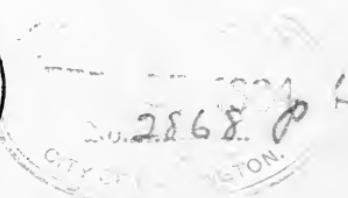
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## ANCIENT FIELDS.

BY

REV. EGBERT C. LAWRENCE, A.M.,

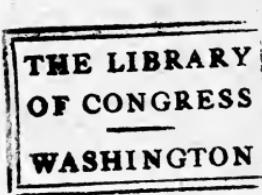
*Formerly Adjunct Professor of History in Union  
College.*



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To My Wife,

BY WHOSE CONSTANT ENCOURAGEMENT

ANY LITERARY LABOR

BECOMES A PLEASANT RECREATION,

THIS VOLUME

IS MOST LOVINGLY

DEDICATED.



## PREFACE.

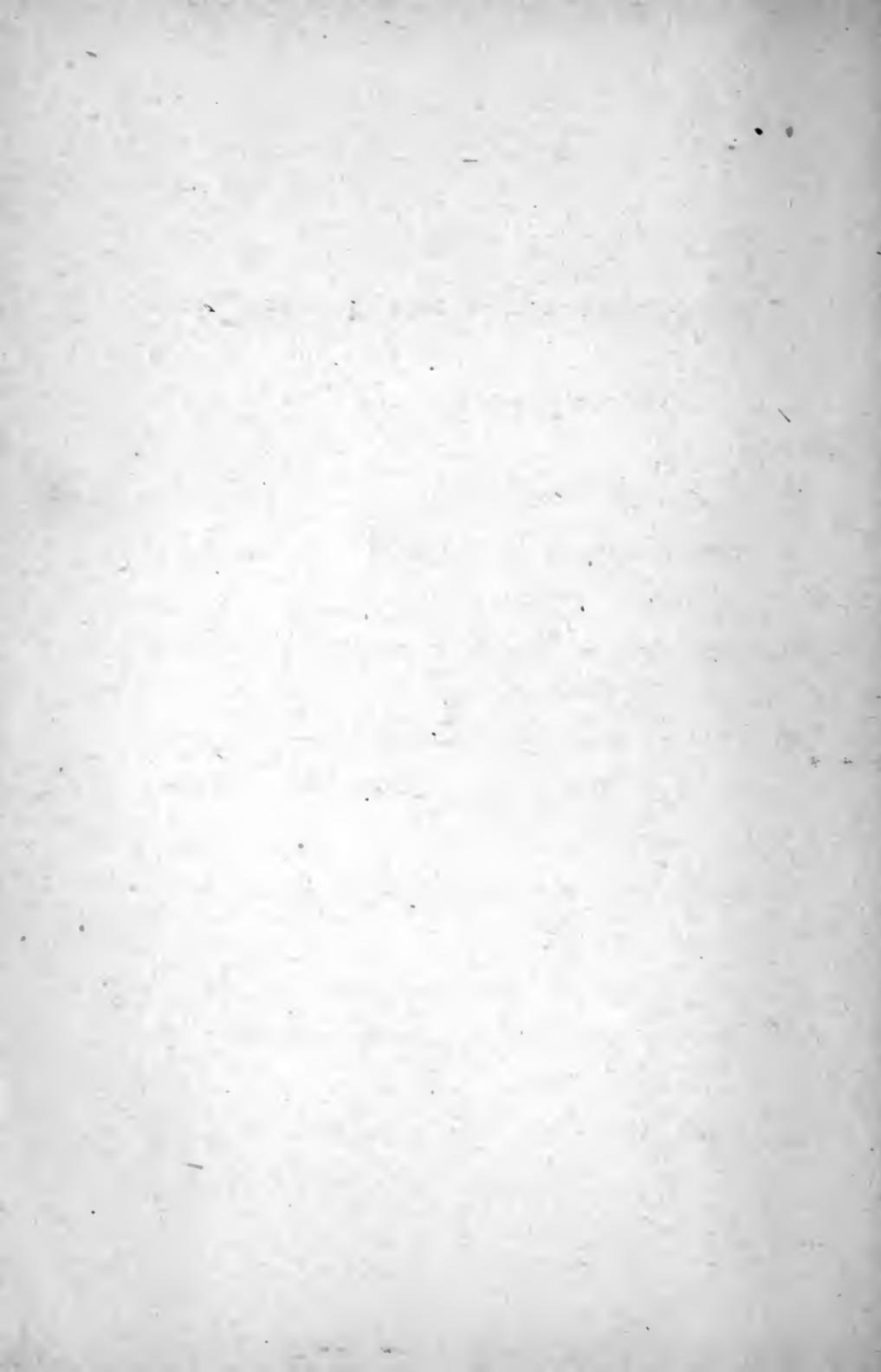
In preparing these recreations no effort has been made to exhaust any subject by entering into minute details; nor for the sake of completeness to furnish a bare catalogue of names, dates, and bald statistics.

An exhaustive treatise upon any topic usually exhausts the reader's patience, while a long list of names and numbers is likely to be no more fascinating and profitable for general reading than would be a common city directory.

“THAT WHICH INTERESTS IS REMEMBERED,” was a favorite saying of the great teacher, Horace Mann. Bearing this truth in mind, the author of the following chapters has endeavored to seize and dwell upon a few salient facts and features in different countries, and to talk about some of the celebrated characters of antiquity long enough to produce an impression upon the memory and to kindle a desire for farther investigation. The work is now submitted to the public with the hope that it may find a welcome among intelligent readers.

E. C. L.

ALEXANDRIA BAY, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1884.



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## CHAPTER I.

These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air;  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve.—SHAKESPEARE.

**H**E CREATION.—Many different theories have been held concerning the origin of the earth and the universe, but the Bible furnishes the only true account. Therein we learn that God by the word of his power created all things and from the chaotic state of the elements he caused the waters to be gathered together and made the dry land appear. Then he clothed the earth with vegetation and adorned the heavens with the sun, the moon, and the glittering stars. And God gave life to every fish and beast and bird. And as a crowning act to this great work God created man, forming his body from the dust of the ground, and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Then knowing that it was not good for man to be alone, the same Almighty Being created woman to be his companion. Thus the first parents of the human family were created in the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, having his law written in their hearts with power to fulfill it with dominion over the creatures and endowed with immortal souls. Such is the high origin of the first man and woman, who were named Adam and Eve.

**The Fall.**—God planted a garden in the land of Eden and assigned it to man as his dwelling-place. Four streams issued from it. The Euphrates is one and the Tigris is thought to be another; while the other two are unknown or at least not identified. The garden seems to have been located somewhere on the elevated table-land of Armenia. Adam is charged to till and keep it, and leave is granted to eat the fruit of every tree except one. But Satan, the tempter, a fallen spirit, appeared upon the scene in the form of a serpent and persuaded the woman to pluck and eat the forbidden fruit. The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat. Thereupon they immediately begin to suffer the penalty of their sin. The serpent is deservedly cursed. Sorrows are multiplied to Eve and all her daughters; and Adam and all his sons are doomed to eat bread in the sweat of their faces all the days of their lives, and to bear trouble till their bodies moulder back to the dust whence they were formed. And the ground itself is cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to plague man in his toil and render his labor more difficult and disagreeable. Moreover, Adam and Eve are forthwith expelled from the garden of Eden, and Cherubim and a flaming sword are set at the entrance to guard it, and prevent the return of the guilty pair.

**The Deluge.**—The next great event recorded in the history of the world is the deluge. God causes an awful flood to overwhelm the ancient inhabitants and destroy them from off the face of the earth. After the fall and expulsion from Eden, sin speedily corrupts the hearts of Adam and his posterity. Evil passions and desires awake and disturb the peace of society. Man's hand soon becomes stained with his brother's blood, and the violent impulses of a rude and unrestrained nature plunge the later generations deeper and deeper into the disorders of vice and crime. Ungodliness spreads infection on every side till wickedness and violence at length so generally prevail that Noah is the only man to be found who has kept the faith. For more than a hundred years Noah preaches righteousness, and the long suffering of a patient God waits in vain for the repentance of wicked men. “They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark and knew not until the flood came and took them all away.” Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, with their wives, alone are rescued in the ark and saved from the general destruction of the human family.

**The Tower of Babel.**—After this just and fearful judgment of the flood, Noah's posterity increases so rapidly that the later generations descended from his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are forced to scatter abroad over the neighboring countries, and there establish new

homes for themselves. They then conceive the idea of erecting the Tower of Babel, "whose top was to reach unto heaven," and to be a perpetual memorial unto them. They are not allowed, however, to proceed very far with the work before God frustrates their design by confounding their language. On this account the Tower is named Babel, or Confusion. Thence the people separate and disperse to all the four quarters of the earth, and plant their colonies in Asia, Africa, and Europe, each according to their new language.

## CHAPTER II.

“ Confucius flees with Buddha  
Before the rising day,  
And every dark pagoda  
Is crumbling to decay.”

**C**HINA.—The land of Sinim is the name applied to China in the Bible. But Heavenly Kingdom and Middle Kingdom are the names by which the Chinese love best to distinguish their country; the latter referring to the central place among the nations which they imagine themselves to occupy; and the former denoting their supposed celestial origin. Cathay, or the Flowery Land, is still another title bestowed upon it by early travelers. The name China is derived from Ching Wong, an early king who reigned in the third century before Christ. He was noted for conquering the Tartars and building the great wall as a barrier to prevent their incursions. None but an absolute monarch could ever have constructed such a stupendous monument of human power and industry. It is 1,500 miles long, thirty feet high, and fifteen feet wide on the top, strengthened and guarded by embattled towers rising at convenient distances along the whole line. The same emperor who ordered the mighty wall to be built, incredible as it may well seem, is said to have cared so little for the moral and intellectual good of his people that he commanded his subjects to destroy the whole body of Chinese literature, in the foolish and disgraceful hope of thus obliterate-

ating every vestige of Chinese history previous to the beginning of his own dynasty. More than five hundred learned men were barbarously buried alive for refusing to obey the edict. The works of Confucius were secreted and saved from the general destruction.

**Confucius**, who was born in the sixth century before Christ, has enjoyed a fame more widely extended than that of any other moral philosopher. Through all the changing dynasties his descendants have received distinguished honors. And during all the years that have elapsed from his time to the present, his writings have been the principal objects of study in the schools of that vast Chinese empire. As a public teacher he never refused to give his instructions to any who had the ability and a true wish to learn. He was impatient with stupidity. "When I have presented," said he, "one corner of a subject to any one, and he can not from it learn the other three, I do not repeat my lesson." The basis of the Chinese government is that the ruler or officer should be as a father and the people as children. Probably Confucius did not originate this beautiful thought, but he certainly did everything in his power to give it practical efficiency. The following sayings of his serve to illustrate the genius and character of the Chinese sage:

"Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous."

"When we see men of worth we should think of equalling them; when we see men of a contrary charac-

ter we should turn inward and examine ourselves."

"Good government obtains when those who are near are made happy, and those who are far off are attracted."

He declared the necessary conditions of a government to be "Sufficiency of food, military equipment, and confidence of the people in their ruler." The last he considered the most important. Dispense with the military equipment if necessary, and next "part with the food; from of old death has been the lot of all men, but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the State."

"What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others."

"I am not concerned that I have no office; I am concerned how I may fit myself for one."

"I am not concerned that I am not known; I seek to be worthy to be known."

"The superior man is affable, but not adulatory. The mean man is adulatory, but not affable."

One of the disciples of Confucius affirmed in praise of his master that "He had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, and no egotism."

**The Chinese Language** is very difficult for the foreigner to learn, from the fact that it is composed of such a great number of monosyllables written with different characters. The number of really different characters having the sanction of good usage is not far from 25,000,

many of which are of rare occurrence. A knowledge of from 5,000 to 10,000 is said to be sufficient for nearly all the practical needs of the scholar. The more complete dictionaries give from 40,000 to 60,000 words, of which obsolete and duplicate forms and proper names make up perhaps one-half.

At the opening of this century, ROBERT MORRISON, a young Englishman, consecrated himself to the great work of preaching the gospel to the Chinese, and, in preparation therefor, began the study of their language. The extreme difficulty of its acquirement may be illustrated by a conversation which he is reported to have had with a gentleman at that period.

“In visiting the library of the British Museum,” says the gentleman above referred to, “I frequently saw a young man who appeared to be deeply occupied in his studies. The book he was reading appeared to be in a language and character totally unknown to me. My curiosity was awakened, and, apologizing to him for the liberty I was taking, I ventured to ask what was the language that engaged so much of his attention.

“‘The Chinese,’ he modestly replied.

“‘And do you understand the language?’ I said.

“‘I am trying to understand it,’ he added, ‘but it is attended with singular difficulty.’

“‘And what may be your object,’ I asked, ‘in studying a language so proverbially difficult of attainment, and considered to be even insuperable to European talent and industry?’

“‘I can scarcely define my motives,’ he remarked. ‘All that I know is that my mind is powerfully wrought upon by some strong and indescribable impulse; and if the language be capable of being surmounted by human zeal and perseverance, I mean to make the experiment. What may be the final result, time only can develop.’”

Now glance forward for more than a quarter of a century, which period he spent at his solitary post in Canton as the founder and pioneer of Protestant missions in China, and behold a part of the wonderful result of this young English student’s investigations in the library of the British Museum. Besides publishing a Chinese grammar of 300 quarto pages, and translating the entire Bible into Chinese, he completed the most gigantic of his literary labors. This was a Chinese dictionary issued in three parts: the first containing two thousand seven hundred pages, and defining forty thousand characters; the second containing twelve thousand symbols; and the third containing five hundred pages. The East India Company published this great work at a cost of seventy-five thousand dollars.

Thus Morrison had the honor of giving the world a Chinese dictionary, and of giving the Bible in their own language to the most populous nation on the face of the earth.

Indeed, the **population** of China is so dense that solitude is a rare luxury. The whole vast empire is covered with cities, towns, and villages swarming with four hun-

dred millions of inhabitants. Satiated with this ever seething mass of humanity, the missionary often longs for the wild solitudes of his native land. It would afford such inexpressible delight to be alone. The shops of a Chinese city are open in front, and usually display on a sign-board a picture of the special kind of goods for sale within. A stranger will be likely to notice the odd names which the streets bear. The following names are a few common examples: "Street of Nine-fold Brightness, of Ten Thousand Happinesses, of the Sweeping Dragon, of Everlasting Love, of One Hundred Grandsons, of One Thousand Beatitudes, of Golden Profits."

**The Architecture** of China is poor and mean compared with that of other countries. It may be picturesque, but it can hardly be termed grand or beautiful. In the towns, the private residences are confined to separate streets; and being only one story high and built without exterior windows, they resemble military encampments. Some of the public monuments are well worthy of notice. Perhaps the most famous one was the Porcelain tower of Nanking. It was octagonal in form, nine stories or 240 feet high, and 40 feet in diameter at the base. The value of this structure was incredibly great, its walls being covered with porcelain and gold, and its niches filled with countless images of gold. It is now no longer standing, having been destroyed in a recent rebellion by men greedy to gain possession of the gold.

In the city of Peking there is a magnificent marble pagoda built by the emperor over the clothes of a Buddhist priest who died of small-pox. Pilgrims from a long distance may often be seen at this shrine worshipping and measuring their length on the ground, in making a circuit around it.

The Chinese possess rather a mixed **character** composed of both good and bad elements. They are known to be generally a peaceful, industrious, and thrifty people. And yet they are often said to be cruel, sensual, dishonest and deceitful, imitative, "peculiar," and tricky. They have a high regard for learning. In fact their positions of honor and trust are awarded by competitive literary examinations to those who prove themselves best qualified to fill them.

Tea and silk are the most important productions of China.

Though the Chinese are intensely conservative, self-sufficient, and radically opposed to change, yet some modern inventions are being introduced. A few telegraph lines have been established, and tramways are being laid.

The Chinese are skilled workmen, though at present they exhibit little evidence of being endowed with inventive genius. In this respect, the people of the present generation are far inferior to their ancestors; for it is certain that printing, gunpowder, the mariner's compass, and the manufacture of paper, porcelain, silk, and clocks were first invented in China.

**Marriage** in China is a matter which is chiefly arranged by parents for their children. An agent called "a go between," comes to the aid of the parents in making the match. He keeps a list of all eligible young ladies and gentlemen, with all necessary details and particulars. When a satisfactory selection has been made by the parents, the contracting parties interchange presents through the agent, and perform various religious rites. There is no courtship, and the bride and groom seldom see each other till after the principal wedding ceremonies are performed. At one stage of the proceedings, they present a wild goose and gander at the ancestral altar, as an emblem of conjugal fidelity and affection. The bride spends the last thirty days before the wedding in mourning her removal from her paternal home. The last night is consumed in weeping. Finally, when the wedding day comes, the bridegroom sends the bridal chair after his betrothed. The procession returns with her. Closely veiled, she leaves the chair and enters her future home, makes obeisance to her lord, pays respect to the guests and worship to the ancestral tablets, and then retires to an alcove in the bridal chamber. Here the bridegroom receives her alone, lifts her veil, and gazes, probably for the first time, upon the face of his bride.

She then comes forth, and the ceremony proceeds. The bride and groom drink from two cups joined by a scarlet cord, while the attendants invoke upon them future peace and happiness. Before the service ends,

the visitors are expected to examine and praise every part of the bride's attire and ornaments, the beauty of her person, and the smallness of her feet.

But all this pomp and parade is only a hollow mockery. Many maidens every year commit suicide to escape the misery of a heartless marriage and the shame of a polygamist's home.

Infanticide is practiced to a frightful extent in China. Female infants are generally the victims of this horrid and shocking crime. May God hasten the day when the great Chinese nation shall cease to do evil and learn to do well.

## CHAPTER III.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,  
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber  
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.—PSALM XIX.

**J**APAN.—The Empire of Japan comprises four large islands and a great number of small ones lying off the coast of Asia, in the northwestern part of the Pacific Ocean. The largest of the group is the island of Niphon, which name properly belongs to the whole country. The Empire is about 1600 miles long, and 200 miles wide in the broadest part. The coasts are generally bold and rocky and indented with numerous bays, forming spacious and secure harbors. Among the many beautiful names which the Japanese apply to their native country, is “The Land of the Rising Sun,” a title well describing its location as the most eastern of all the Asiatic Empires. Their national emblem represents the sun rising out of the sea.

**The Climate** is various. In the extreme north, the mercury often sinks far below zero in the coldest weather, and the snow falls to a great depth. In the south, the sun’s heat is sometimes oppressive, though it is far less debilitating than it is on the coasts of China and India. The temperature of the central districts, where the densest population is gathered, is generally mild and agreeable.

The highest mountain is Fuji-Yama, its altitude being about 14,000 feet, and its summit is crowned with perpetual snow. It is distant about eighty miles from Tokio, the largest city of Japan.

**Tokio** is the capital of the empire. It has a well-endowed college and an engineering school which, in the estimation of Gen. U. S. Grant, is second to no other in the world. The city is provided with hospitals and asylums for infants and paupers, and by means of railroads and telegraph lines, is daily increasing its facility for quick and easy communication with all parts of the empire. As in most countries which are subject to the visitation of earthquakes and furious storms, the buildings are low,—one story, or at most two, in height. But the gardens and open spaces are numerous, and give an air of grateful comfort and freedom that sufficiently compensates for any lack of stately grandeur in architecture. The lawns, and all the grounds of the wealthy are kept with assiduous care and skill.

\* “You wonder at the number of servants about you—servants for everything. There, for instance, is a gardener working over a tree. The tree is one of the dwarf species that you see in Japan,—one of the eccentricities of landscape gardening,—and this gardener files and clips and adorns his tree as carefully as a lapidary burnishing a gem. ‘There has been work enough done on that tree,’ said the General, ‘since I have been here,

to raise all the food a small family would require during the winter.' Labor is too good a thing to be misapplied, and when the result of the labor is a plum-tree that you could put on your dinner-table, or a peach-tree in fruition that might go into a water-goblet, he is apt to regard it as misapplied. Here are a dozen men in blue cotton dress working at a lawn. I suppose in a week they would do as much as a handy Yankee boy could achieve in a morning with a lawn-mower."

"Your Japanese workman sits down over his meadow or his flower-bed or his bit of road as though it were a web of silk he was embroidering."

The art of applying a peculiarly beautiful and durable varnish to various fancy articles, is practiced by this people with the greatest skill and perfection. The lacquer, when used upon papier-maché plates, cups, and boxes, becomes hard, like enamel, and adds much to the strength and durability of the object.

The Japanese **gymnasts** are the most noted in the world. They are capable of performing any feats which our professional athletes can achieve, and many others which the latter never even dream of attempting. Rev. J. G. Wood gives some remarkable examples of their performances, in his "Uncivilized Races." A man lies on his back, and balances on the soles of his feet a ladder thirty feet high, to the top of which a second ladder is attached at right angles, like the top of the letter F. Then a boy goes up and down the ladder, and even

crawls to the end of the cross-piece and there hangs by his instep. This astonishing feat is repeated day after day. The heavy ladder is placed on the upturned feet, and in a moment is as steady as if planted in the ground. And its steadiness is not impaired by the boy's passing over it, though the center of gravity is continually changed. During the performance, not the slightest wavering is perceptible. Mr. Wood, the writer above referred to, tells some almost incredible stories about the skill these Japanese performers have attained in spinning tops. "A man," he says, "spun a top on the edge of a sword, making it pass from one end of the blade to the other. He flung the top in the air, and threw the string at it: the top caught the middle of the string by the peg, wound itself up, and was again flung into the air, spinning faster than before. It was then caught on the slender stem of a pipe, along which it ran as if alive, was passed behind the back and caught again in front, and lastly was received upon the hem of the sleeve, made to spin up the garment, over the neck and shoulders and down the sleeve of the opposite side. It was also made to spin upon a slight string stretched from the wall, and to pass backward and forward as long as the spinner chose." After relating a number of such tales about these wonderful tops, the writer ends the chapter by saying that "they could be built into a perfect edifice of tops, three or four spinning upon each other, sometimes each leaning in a different direction, and then being brought upright by a touch of the ever-ready fan. The

concluding feat was a very curious one. Some thirty feet above the heads of the spectators was hung a model of a temple, from which depended a string. The chief top-spinner then took a small but very heavy top, wound up its string, and flung the top in the air, drawing back the arm so that the top came flying into his hand. He went under the temple, gave the pendent string a half turn around the peg, and away went the top into the temple, bursting open its doors and flinging out a quantity of rose leaves, which came fluttering down around top as it descended the string and fell into the hands of the performer."

Shintooism is the native **religion** of Japan. It is a system of mythology resembling the ancient religions of China, rising from a chaos of legends and developing into a creed which embraces countless divinities called Kami, representing embodied principles of life and activity and deified heroes.

Buddhism also widely prevails. The number of Buddhist priests, including monks, is three times as great as that of all the clergy of the United States. Dai Butz is the largest and most famous idol in Japan. It is a colossal hollow bronze statue, about fifty feet high, representing the god in a sitting posture, and wearing an expression of sublime repose. About the middle of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits, led by Francis Xavier, made their appearance in Japan, and for thirty-eight years labored to spread Christianity among the inhabitants. Their labors were rewarded with abundant suc-

cess, the converts numbering nearly two million souls. The heathen priesthood took the alarm, and the Emperor issued an edict prohibiting his subjects on pain of death from embracing the new religion. The missionaries and all foreigners were banished from the country. A frightful persecution followed, in which thousands of Christians perished. Afterwards all the seaports were closed, and all intercourse with other nations strictly forbidden.

The **government** of Japan is graduating into a limited monarchy, with a parliament founded on the model of the British Parliament. The Mikado or Emperor belongs to the oldest dynasty of rulers in the world, the first of the line having begun to reign 660 B. C.

The **recent changes** in Japan are truly wonderful. Many seaports have been thrown open to foreign trade; the Mikado has abandoned all the mystery and seclusion held sacred for so many centuries; the most promising students among the young men have been sent abroad to be educated for the public service; seminaries and schools, benevolent and scientific institutions have been established; a free press is discussing the affairs of the nation, and publishing the news of the world; a new postal system has been arranged; the army and the navy have been reorganized; all the modern helps to a safe navigation have been introduced; the calendar of western nations has been adopted; a gold and silver coinage

on a decimal scale has been put in circulation ; and eminent scholars have been sought for in Europe and America, and invited to take office in the empire, in order that the country may share the benefit of their experience. Such are some of the modern wonders in Japan. And they certainly show that the people of that island-country are decidedly in earnest for improvements. They are an intellectual people, and they set a high value upon education. A talented person rapidly advances to positions of honor and trust. In filling public offices, they always try to find the man best fitted for the place. The Japanese are also noted for their politeness, truthfulness, and amiable and agreeable manners.

## CHAPTER IV.

This above all—to thine own self be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.—SHAKESPEARE.

**T**HE DISPERSION.—After the Deluge, according to an Armenian tradition, Noah distributed the habitable earth, from north to south, between his sons, giving to Ham the region afterwards inhabited by the blacks; to Shem, the region of the tawny; and to Japheth, the region of the ruddy. By this distribution, the middle of the earth fell to the sons of Shem: Syria, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, and Arabia. To the sons of Ham: Africa and a part of India. To the sons of Japheth: Europe and Asia Minor.

According to a scheme agreed on by Jewish and Christian commentators, from Shem—the father of the tawny, olive, or Mongolian race—are descended the Hebrews, Persians, Assyrians, Lydians, and Syrians.

From Ham—the father of the black race—are descended the Babylonians, Egyptians, Lybians, and Phœnicians.

From Japheth—the father of the white or Caucasian race—are descended the Germans, Turks, Huns, Fins, Medes, Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Tartars, Muscovites, and Thracians.

**Hebrews.**—While the main part of the world was wholly given over to the practice of idolatry, a Semitic people dwelling in Mesopotamia preserved the original belief in a single God. They were a nomadic race whose property consisted mainly of flocks, herds, and tents.

**Abram**, whose name was finally changed to Abraham, at the command of God left his home among this people and settled himself, with his family and servants and his nephew Lot,\* in “the promised land” of Canaan, or Palestine, where they received from the native inhabitants the name of “Strangers from the other side,” or Hebrews.

The birth of Abraham occurred about 2,000 B. C., and he thus occupies a position midway between the creation and the dawn of the Christian Era. The following dates given in round numbers may aid the student's memory in fixing the facts of Old Testament history: Adam, 4000 years B. C.; Abraham, 2000; Moses, 1500; Solomon, 1000; Daniel, 600; and Malachi, 400 years B. C. All the authentic history of the first 2500 years of the world is contained in the brief book of Genesis. Therein may be found short sketches of the lives of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The chief event in the life of Abraham was the trial of his faith when commanded to sacrifice his son through

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\* Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities of the plain now covered by the Dead Sea, were destroyed by fire from heaven. Lot and his two daughters escaped from the overthrow, while Lot's wife looked back and was changed to a pillar of salt.

whom he expected to be blessed with a countless posterity. At the last moment, a special providence interferes and furnishes a ram as a substitute to be sacrificed instead of the son.

**Isaac**, son of the preceding, who contracted a marriage with the lovely Rebekah, a relative from Mesopotamia, in a rather romantic way, was a man of humble, tranquil, meditative character, devout, full of faith, and submissive to the will of God. Isaac had two sons, Esau and **Jacob**. The latter, aided by the cunning stratagem of his mother, succeeded in obtaining his father's chief blessing; and, in consequence, he deemed it prudent to flee from his home to avoid the wrath of his brother when he should discover the deceit that had been practised upon him. Jacob directs his flight to the early home of his ancestors, where his uncle Laban dwells; and on his journey, where night overtakes him, he lies down to sleep with a stone for his pillow. He dreams; and in his dream he beholds a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, over which the angels are passing back and forth.

The familiar hymn, "Nearer my God to thee," is chiefly founded upon this incident in the life of Jacob. In after years, an angel wrestled with the patriarch till day-break, and then changed his name from Jacob to Israel. And from that time forward, the Hebrews were called Israelites, or children of Israel.

**Joseph** was one of the twelve sons of Jacob, and was the special favorite of his father. On this account his brothers were jealous of him, and at the first favorable opportunity they sold him, to be carried down to Egypt as a slave, where, after various trials, he was raised to be chief in authority next to Pharaoh. By the prudent foresight of Joseph, Egypt lays in store an abundance of corn for a seven years' famine. And thither the Canaanites resort to buy food.

Thus God's providence prepares the way for the removal of Jacob and his household to Goshen, a fertile district of Egypt, on the eastern shore of the Nile. Here the Israelites reside, till they become so numerous as to excite the jealous apprehension of Pharaoh, who thereupon subjects them to hard bondage, and orders their male children to be put to death as soon as they are born. Then God raises up a leader to free his oppressed people.

**Moses** is born; and after being hidden for three months by his parents, is exposed on the river, where he is found by the daughter of Pharaoh, by whom he is adopted and thoroughly educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. And he is further disciplined for the great work to which he is destined, by a forty years' life in the desert of Midian. At the end of this period, God appears to him in the burning bush, and appoints him and Aaron, his brother, to deliver their people from bondage in Egypt. At the refusal of Pharaoh to let the

Lord's people go, ten successive plagues are sent — water changed to blood, frogs, lice, swarms of flies, murrain, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and the slaying of the first-born. The passover is instituted, and Moses leads forth 600,000 men, besides children and a mixed multitude, aggregating in all from 3,000,000 to 5,000,000 persons. Pharaoh pursues them with his army, but God opens a dry passage through the Red Sea for the Israelites, while he suffers their pursuers to drown.

At the base of Mount Sinai, the chosen people encamp, and receive the moral and ceremonial laws from God, their divine ruler. And the decalogue or ten commandments here first proclaimed have furnished, and still continue to this day to furnish, the main groundwork for civil law throughout all christendom.

By divine direction, the people bring free-will offerings and build a beautiful tabernacle as a sanctuary for public worship. A vast amount of gold and silver and other valuable material was used upon this structure and its furniture.

The following were the principal articles contained in it: The altar of burnt offerings and the brazen laver were in the court; the golden candle stick, the altar of incense, and the table of show-bread were in the Holy Place; while in the "Holy of Holies" there was only the ark of the covenant, in which a copy of the law was deposited and preserved.

For forty years the children of Israel wander in the wilderness; and during all that period, they are supplied

with manna and quail and water by a daily series of miracles. Their clothing waxes not old upon their backs, nor their shoes upon their feet. They started from Egypt proud, unbelieving, and rebellious. In the course of the long journeying, time, disease and many a grievous plague have swept most of the haughty leaders into the grave. Their descendants have been trained by severe chastisements and by the sight of these stupendous and long-continued miracles, to be submissive ; they have been taught to love virtue and prize freedom ; they have been charged to be strong and of good courage that they may go in boldly and possess the promised land of Canaan. Moses, the great leader and law-giver, is not permitted to cross the Jordan. From the top of Mount Pisgah he views the beautiful fields of the Holy Land, and then his lofty spirit takes its flight to fairer fields on high. "And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated."

**Joshua** is then chosen to the leadership with the most encouraging assurances of divine help. The work of conquest, however, does not proceed very far under the command of the valiant Joshua before the Israelites hasten to abandon the war and demand the distribution of the conquered territory. The twelve tribes share the land by lot in such a way that Ephraim and Manasseh (Joseph's two sons) succeed to equal portions, while on the other hand the Levites receive no distinct inheritance,

only a few towns and the tenth part of the products of the earth being allotted to them.

From this time the Hebrews were governed by **Judges**, the most renowned of whom were Gideon, Jephthah, the giant Samson and the brave and poetic prophetess Deborah. The just and upright Samuel closes the line of judges, changes the government to a monarchy and anoints Saul the first king.

**David**, the sweet singer of Israel, a shepherd youth, but a man after God's own heart, is next raised to the throne and founds a family which continues to reign till the subjugation of the country by the Chaldeans. Under Solomon the beautiful temple is built at Jerusalem to take the place of the tabernacle. Under Rehoboam, David's grandson, ten tribes revolt and form the separate kingdom of Israel, between which and the kingdom of Judah frequent and bloody wars are waged. Finally the greater part of both nations are carried away captive to Babylon and the eastern countries. Thence a few small colonies of the Hebrews return after an exile of seventy years and build another temple at Jerusalem, and attempt in vain to re-establish their nation. God has ceased to fight their battles. The Seleucian Kings and Roman Emperors are too strong for them when the divine aid is withdrawn.

In the year 70 A. D., **Titus**, the Roman General, takes and utterly **destroys** Jerusalem.

Since that time, though the sacred capital has been rebuilt, the Hebrews have ceased to exist as a separate nation, but are scattered among the people of every country. Hated, hunted and persecuted they have fled from place to place, still retaining their characteristic traits. Wherever they are they cherish an undying affection for the land of Judea, the land of their fathers, and hope yet to recover it from the grasp of their enemies.

## CHAPTER V.

“There is but one God and Mohammed is his prophet.”

**A**RABIA.—This is a country of Western Asia, lying south and east of Palestine. Ptolemy was the first writer who divided it into three parts; namely, Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petræa, and Arabia Felix, which division is still recognized, as in general each name is descriptive of the natural features and character of the district to which it is applied.

“The desert” and “the rocky” are the parts on the east and south, immediately adjacent to the Holy Land, and are inhabited by wild tribes of Bedawees, who claim to be descended some from Joktan, the son of Eber, and others from Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar. They lead a wandering life, dwelling mostly in tents and feeding their flocks and herds wherever they can find pasture. Stony Arabia, though smaller than the other divisions, is rich in historical associations. It was familiar ground to the patriarch Job; to Moses, who here fed his father-in-law’s sheep, saw the burning bush, and led the children of Israel in their forty years’ wanderings; and to the prophet Elijah, who here with fear and awe listened to the “still small voice.”

Arabia Felix, or “the happy,” lying at the southeastern extremity of the peninsula, was the chief seat of wealth and population. The Queen of Sheba, who visited Sol-

omon, probably came from this region. Here are the famous cities of Mecca and Medina. And this is the place of the Mohammedan religion.

**Mohammed**, the founder, was born at Mecca, 571 A. D. The Koreish, the noble and distinguished tribe to which he belonged, kept the temple Kaaba in whose wall was fixed a small oval, black stone, said by tradition to have been given to Abraham as a petrified angel, once pure white, but soon blackened by the kisses of worshiping sinners. The atmosphere which Mohammed breathed in his youth was strongly charged with a spirit of wild poetry, fable, and superstition. Left an orphan at six, he passed into the hands of a merchant-uncle, and became, in time, camel-driver and salesman, often taking long journeys with the caravans and listening with rapt attention and delight to the strange legends and traditions of the desert.

The lad gave early promise of future eminence, though he was shamefully deficient in the elements of education, it being doubtful whether he could read or write; and seldom was he able to quote a verse of poetry correctly. Indeed, he styles himself "the illiterate prophet." It is certain, however, that as he grew up he won the respect and confidence of his countrymen by his aversion to any thing dishonorable, and by his noble conduct according to the Arabian standard.

At the age of twenty-five, he becomes the mercantile agent of a wealthy widow by the name of Kadijah, and

in the management of her affairs, achieves such success as to win her heart and hand. Her forty years do not hinder her from looking with favor upon the young and handsome steward. They marry, and live in peace and comfort, till in his fortieth year Mohammed proclaims himself a prophet. For some time previously, he has been in the habit of retiring to a cave for secret study and meditation. Possessed of ample means now for the support of himself and family, he can enjoy leisure when he pleases. He is fond of solitude, and loves to wander alone through the wild gorges around Mecca. And one day, after a solitary walk, he returns home with the strange story upon his lips that the angel Gabriel has appeared to him and revealed wonderful truths, and commissioned him to preach a new religion, declaring, "There is but one God and Mohammed is his prophet."

His wife and nephew at once embrace the new faith, and shortly afterwards Abu-Bekr becomes a convert. But the progress is too slow to satisfy the enthusiastic apostle. Relatives and former friends hear his claims with coldness and incredulity; and when he speaks of overthrowing idolatry and restoring the ancient religion of Abraham, they put him to silence with an angry outburst of indignation. For years afterward, Mohammed is the object of bitter hatred and persecution. His enemies demand that he show proof of his divine mission by working miracles. And to satisfy this demand, he publishes his famous night journey to heaven, where the angel Gabriel introduces him to patriarchs, prophets, and

to God himself, which announcement only results in more violence and ridicule on the part of his foes and the desertion of some of his disciples.

At length, in the year 619, Kadijah dies, and he mourns her loss, though not so deeply as to prevent him from marrying several other wives; for he found it convenient to allow and practise polygamy. When a later wife tried to convince him, on the score of youth, that she was better than Kadijah, his first love, Mohammed replied :

“There never can be a better! She believed in me when men despised me. She relieved my wants when I was poor and persecuted by the world.”

On the discovery of a plot laid to murder him, each conspirator having sworn to plunge a sword in his body, the prophet takes refuge in flight at midnight from Mecca to Medina. The date of this flight, or **Hegira**, as it is called, is 622 A. D., and is the beginning of the Mohammedan era.

Not meeting with the desired success, Mohammed now determines to propagate the new faith by fighting, not by preaching. “The sword,” he cries, “is the key of heaven and hell.” Among the spoils of an early victory he finds a sword of the keenest edge and finest temper, which he carries in all his future battles. About this time he begins to seal his letters with a silver signet inscribed

**MOHAMMED.**  
APOSTLE  
OF GOD.

In 629 he takes possession of Mecca with his troops; and mounted on his camel, he rides around the Kaaba seven times and orders the 360 idols on its roof to be destroyed, saying, "The truth is come; let falsehood disappear." He survives this, perhaps the grandest day of his life, three years, when with heart broken by the death of his only son and his frame racked with pain and poison, he falls a victim to a violent fever.

In person, Mohammed was of medium height, with a fair and ruddy complexion, full beard, dark eyes, graceful neck, and fascinating appearance. His diet was most simple, living mostly on dates and water, and caring little for cooked food. His manner was lively, and his conversation often humorous. Though the apostle of error, he certainly possessed more than ordinary talent.

**The Koran**, which contains the creed of Mohammed, consists of pretended revelations from the angel Gabriel, uttered by the prophet, and first written down on palm leaves and mutton bones by his disciples. The following are some of the leading points of doctrine :

1. Unity of God.
2. Existence of angels varying in rank; among them a fallen spirit banished from Paradise for refusing to worship Adam: also a lower order of spirits subject to death, called Genii and Peris.
3. Six great prophets were recognized,—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed.

4. A beautiful Paradise filled with sensual delights for the good ; and a hell for the punishment of the wicked.

5. Fatalism. Man has no free-will. His action and destiny are fixed by an unalterable fate.

And furthermore, four religious duties are enjoined upon all Moslems :

1. Ablution, followed by prayer five times a day with the face turned towards Mecca.

2. The giving of tithes in charity.

3. Fasting from rise to set of sun every day during the month of Rhamadan. Pork and wine are strictly prohibited at all times.

4. A pilgrimage to Mecca.

There is no doubt that the Koran aided in producing a reformation, and in abolishing idolatry and the horrid practice of infanticide and demon-worship. But it authorizes and encourages polygamy, and that is the foulest blot on its system of morals. Tayler Lewis rightly regards this feature and \* “the too sensual aspect it gives to the happiness of Paradise” as “positive deformities.” Its code of laws also curiously forbids the Moslem to lend money on interest.

After the death of its founder, Islamism increased greatly under his successors, the Caliphs. At the close of the first century after Mohammed professed to have received his divine commission as a prophet of God, the religion he started had spread over Arabia, Syria, Asia Minor, Persia, Northern India, Egypt, Northern Africa,

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\* Article on the Koran in Johnson's Cyclopædia.

Spain, and part of Gaul. At present the Moslems number about 180,000,000. The causes of such rapid extension among so many nations are not difficult to be discovered.

In the first place, as soon as the Arabs, or Saracens as they are also called, were converted, they held themselves in duty bound to force their creed upon all the rest of the world. Accordingly they endeavored to make a universal conquest. They called upon men everywhere to choose between three things, Koran, tribute, or sword; that is, either to adopt the Koranic religion, or to buy the right to continue Christians, or heathens by paying tribute, or else to take up arms and fight against them if they could.

In the next place the laws and doctrines of the Koran were admirably adapted to the natural desires and dispositions of men and especially to the manners and customs of Oriental people. For the most part the Moslems are grossly ignorant, basely immoral, and foolishly superstitious. Women are degraded. They seldom enter the mosques; and when they do, they sit apart from the men, and are regarded as mere soulless creatures, only fit to be man's tools and slaves here and hereafter.

**Mecca** is the most noted city in the Mohammedan world, as being the birth-place of the prophet. It has neither manufactures nor trade. Its growth and prosperity are due to the vast numbers of pilgrims who annually assemble here to pray in the mosque and kiss the black stone of the Kaaba.

The mosque at Medina containing the tomb and mausoleum of Mohammed is an equally sacred goal to pilgrims.

**The Mosque of Omar**, named after the second Caliph and built on the site of Solomon's temple at Jerusalem, is likewise held in the highest estimation by all devout Moslems. It is a magnificent building, covered with marbles of different hues, and with porcelain tiles of intricate designs, lighted by beautiful and brilliant, stained-glass windows, and capped with lofty dome, graceful spire, and gilded crescent. Within, the dome is supported on pillars of polished porphyry, and the walls and ceilings are gracefully inscribed with Arabic quotations from the *Koran*. But the greatest attraction is a great, gray rock of limestone directly beneath the dome. Legend has invested this rock with peculiar sanctity. The Moslem devotees are taught to believe the absurdity that "it descended from heaven when the spirit of prophecy was withdrawn from earth and attempted to return to its native quarry when the prophet ascended to glory, but was only restrained by the powerful arm of Gabriel. Refusing to touch the earth again, *it remains suspended in the air seven feet above the top of Mount Moriah!*"

Moreover they say there is a wondrous fountain beneath this rock, from which all the water on the earth flows; and that in one of the unexplored caverns are still treasured the armor of Mohammed, the saddle of his favorite steed,

the scales to be used on the awful judgment-day for weighing the souls of men, David's pomegranates, Solomon's birds, and a silver urn, dislodged from its pedestal by the angel's wing on that memorable night of the prophet's ascension to heaven.

To convince the incredulous beyond the shadow of a doubt that these marvelous tales are true the sheik who now keeps the mosque is ready to show the indentation left in the rock by Mohammed's foot, when he sprang from this spot and ascended to heaven, and also the print of the angel's hand when he hurled the rock back to its resting place and kept it from rising with the foot of the ascending prophet! Alas! to the Christian how much of Mohammedanism is a pitiful delusion? And in the critical judgment of modern science how much of it is only miserable stuff!

“What fools these mortals be!”

## CHAPTER VI.

“ Each minute of a man’s safety he does walk  
A bridge, no thicker than his frozen breath,  
O’er a precipitous and craggy danger  
Yawning to death.”

**A**SSYRIA. The ancient and powerful kingdom of Assyria occupied the upper part of the Mesopotamian valley, with its successive capitals situated on the river Tigris. Its name is probably derived from Asshur, one of the sons of Shem. The surface of the country is mostly a plain, broken here and there by rivers and streams, and by ranges of limestone hills. The fertility of the valleys was probably increased by artificial irrigation from the rivers, as from all accounts the region was exceedingly productive, while Herodotus states that the rainfall was light. The early history of this country is lost in obscurity.

From the record in the book of Genesis, Nineveh seems to have been built by Nimrod, the mighty hunter. This was the most famous of Assyrian cities, though, according to cuneiform inscriptions, the first capital was Asshur, on the Tigris, 60 miles south of Nineveh. The latter, however, was founded soon after the deluge and became, in process of time, the capital of the Kingdom, and flourished for many centuries as the mistress of the East. In Jonah’s day its population probably numbered no less than 600,000 souls. It was situated on the river Tigris,

about 500 miles north-east of Palestine, surrounded by walls 100 feet high and broad enough on top for three chariots to drive upon them abreast. There were 1500 towers, each 200 feet high, and numerous strongholds with gates and bars. The circuit of the city was about 60 miles, and within were splendid palaces adorned with sculptures most wonderful to see. There were parks and pastures alive with animals wild and domestic. There were gardens and groves and orchards filled with fruit and the choice and staple productions of nature. Her people were wealthy and warlike and idolatrous. The Hebrew prophets denounced their pride, treachery, and violence. In the figurative language of the Orient, her merchants are declared to be like the stars in number, her crowned princes as locusts, and her captains as grasshoppers.

To this great and wicked city the prophet Jonah is despatched by the Lord, burdened with a warning of speedy destruction. Timely repentance on the part of all the inhabitants stayed for a season the execution of the sentence. But the city was doomed to fall; and at length, about 750 B. C., it was taken by the Medes, and, later, by Cyaxares, after which it never recovered its former splendor. Its ruin was accomplished by the help of the river. After a siege of two years, a great inundation of the Tigris occurred, and washed away a part of the wall, and the enemy marched in through the breach. Sardanapalus II., who was at that time king of Nineveh, made an effort to repel the invad-

ers, but was defeated. He then retired to his palace, and, having erected a large funeral pyre and placed upon it his richest treasures and his favorite wives, and at last having mounted it himself, he set fire to it, and perished in the flames. This incident furnished the basis for Byron's drama, *Sardanapalus*. The whole story is doubted by modern historians.

The Assyrian Empire was now destroyed, and Nineveh became a cluster of unimportant villages which dwindled and finally sank into hopeless ruin. So complete was its destruction that its site for ages has been almost lost, and its very existence a matter of doubt among infidels. But for the last forty years Botta, Layard, and other enthusiastic antiquarians, have been opening the grave of its ruins and resurrecting the imperishable and indubitable proofs of its former grandeur and power. Their excavations have disclosed temples and palaces and the sculptured memorials of their wars and worship. Winged bulls and lions with human heads and idols in human form, but with the head and wings of an eagle, carved in stone, have been found and brought to light, together with a great many articles of wood, ivory, glass, and metals, all of which show that the Assyrians twenty-four centuries ago had attained a high degree of perfection in carving, modelling, metallurgy, and kindred arts.

The following is the substance of a legend concerning **Semiramis**, the celebrated queen of Assyria. Having secured the coöperation of the chief officers of the state

by fair promises and bribes, she solicited her husband, King Ninus, to put the sovereign power in her hands for five days. He granted her request, and commanded all the provinces of the empire to obey Semiramis. Alas for King Ninus! On attaining the sovereignty, his faithless spouse ordered him to be put to death, and then, as if to atone for such a shocking deed, she at once engaged in various enterprises for the benefit of her dominion. She employed two millions of men to build the great city of Babylon, while she visited every part of her realm to see what improvements she could make for promoting the welfare and happiness of her people. In order to facilitate travel, she levelled mountains and filled up valleys to construct easy and passable roads. And many a barren desert she converted into a fruitful plain by furnishing water through canals and aqueducts completed at enormous expense. For bold engineering projects she displayed a decided genius, and in military matters she was no less distinguished. The neighboring nations felt the invincible power of her arms, and discreetly surrendered to her rule. But there is an end to all earthly careers and greatness. At length discovering a plot to usurp the throne formed by her son, Ninyas, and remembering a response from the oracle of Ammon, she abdicated in favor of her unworthy son, and immediately vanished from the sight of men. The common opinion was that she was changed into a dove, and that several birds of this kind having alighted upon the palace, she joined them and flew away. Hence the dove was ever afterwards held sacred by the Assyrians.

## CHAPTER VII.

“Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness!”—SHAKESPEARE.

**B**ABYLONIA.—This was a part of that great Mesopotamian plain which lay between the river Tigris, and the Arabian desert, and south of Assyria, with the river Euphrates running through the midst of it. In ancient times this valley was noted for the fertility of its soil. “Of all countries that we know,” says Herodotus, “there is none that is so fruitful in grain, of which it yields commonly two-hundred fold.” The fertility was increased by the annual inundations of the rivers, when the super-abundant water was drawn off and distributed by canals over the whole territory, in order that those tracts remote from the rivers might receive the requisite irrigation.

The Babylonians were distinguished for their intellectual ability, commercial enterprise, martial spirit and high civilization. They excelled other ancient nations in astronomy, and were especially fond of astrology. The people were chiefly engaged in agriculture, commerce, and the manufacture of textile fabrics and carpets. They were justly noted also for their high attainments in architecture. They built grand temples and palaces with kiln-dried bricks, which were often covered with an inscription in cuneiform letters. Herodotus gives the fol-

lowing description of the clothing and appearance of the Babylonians of his day: "Their dress is a linen tunic, reaching to the feet and above it another tunic made of wool, besides which they have a short white cloak thrown around them, and shoes of a peculiar fashion, not unlike those worn by the Boeotians. They have long hair, wear turbans on their heads, and anoint their whole body with perfumes." The government was monarchical. The sovereign possessed the power of life and death over his subjects.

**Nebuchadnezzar** (604 B. C.) was the most noted king of Babylon. According to G. Rawlinson: "It is scarcely necessary to say that but for Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonians would have had no place in history. At any rate their actual place is owing almost entirely to this prince, who to the military talents of an able general added a grandeur of artistic conception, and a skill in construction, which place him on a par with the greatest builders of antiquity." Besides making other conquests, he took Jerusalem with his army, destroyed Solomon's temple and carried the Jews into captivity. One of the captives, the Hebrew prophet Daniel, is elevated by this ruler to the second place of honor in the kingdom, as a reward for recovering and interpreting a forgotten dream. In the interpretation the prophet attests the greatness of the king in the following language; "Thou O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Nebuchadnezzar was the first of the monarchs of the world to possess universal sovereignty. Enthroned on the very summit of power and glory, he boasted of the mighty city which he had built for the honor of his majesty, and scarcely had the proud words fallen from his lips when he was called upon to suffer the awful though temporary affliction of losing his reason.

**Babylon**, his capital, was regarded as one of the ancient wonders of the world. It was surrounded by stupendous walls, built of large bricks cemented with bitumen. The height of these walls according to Herodotus, was 350 feet; and the thickness 87 feet. The form of the city was a square, each side of which was fifteen miles long. There were one-hundred gates of solid brass at the extremities of the broad and handsome streets. The houses were three and four stories high, beautifully adorned and possessing ample courts and gardens. The most remarkable buildings were the great temple of Belus, and the two royal palaces, one on either side of the Euphrates. On the grounds of one of these palaces was the famous **hanging garden**. This singular structure was four hundred feet square, and was composed of terraces, rising one above another to a height equal to that of the city walls. It was supported

on tiers of open arches. The top was covered with a large mass of earth on which were beds of flowers, thrifty shrubs, and even trees of considerable size. There was also an aqueduct supplied by machinery with water from the river for the use of the garden. It is affirmed that Nebuchadnezzar constructed this wonderful garden to 'please his wife who, being a native of Media, ever retained a strong attachment for mountains and forests, which abounded in the home of her childhood.

**The tower of Belus** was a square pyramid measuring half a mile in perimeter at the base, and, according to Strabo, reaching the incredible height of 600 feet. There were eight stories gradually decreasing to the summit, which was approached by a broad road winding up around the outside. The tower was mainly devoted to the worship of Bel, though the upper story was doubtless an observatory for studying astronomy. Immense treasures were stored in this temple. There were several statues of massive gold, one of colossal size said to be forty feet high. Here were kept the sacred golden vessels stolen from Solomon's temple.

"When we turn," says G. Rawlinson, "from this picture of the past, to contemplate the present condition of the localities, we are at first struck with astonishment at the small traces which remain of so vast and wonderful a metropolis. The broad walls of Babylon are utterly broken down." The prophecy of scripture is verified. "Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chal-

dees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation." "But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there and satyrs shall dance there."

## CHAPTER VIII.

“ What is good and what is brilliant,  
That we reverence in thee—  
Thy good spirit, thy good kingdom,  
Wisdom, law, and equity.”—HYMN TO ORMUZD.

**P**ERSIA. This is an elevated table-land in the western part of Asia lying, between the Caspian sea and the Persian Gulf. The surface is diversified by clustering hills and mountain-ranges, with extensive salt plains and sandy deserts. In many parts of the country the soil is very rich and fertile; especially is this true in the valleys where an abundance of water can be had for irrigating purposes.

The chief products are wheat, rice, maize and barley among cereals; while among fruits, the orchards yield apples, pears, peaches, cherries, oranges, apricots and most delicious pomegranates. Dates also form a common article of food. Melons and garden-vegetables abound. Many of these Persian fruits are said to be “ unequalled in nourishing power, in savoriness, in richness of flavor, and in beauty of appearance, by any of the same kind produced elsewhere on the earth.” Cotton, tobacco and sugar are also cultivated.

Among wild animals, in various parts of Persia, may be found the lion, the tiger, the antelope, the wild-ass and wild-hog, the hyæna, and deer of various kinds. Domestic animals and birds are numerous, while fish are said to be scarce, except on the shore of the Caspian Sea.

The Persians are a bright and handsome race. They are polite, courteous, refined, intelligent, gay, witty, and, at the same time, false and cunning. They manufacture fire-arms and fine jewelry, elegant silks and woollens, and the richest carpets and shawls. And their commerce with other nations is quite extensive.

**The Government** is despotic. The Shah or chief ruler wields an absolute power over his people. He is at perfect liberty to do whatever he pleases with the lives and property of his subjects, without fear of restraint from law, public opinion, church, or aristocracy. And all the subordinate officers enjoy like freedom with regard to persons below them. Such a social state, continuing for many centuries, has without doubt exercised a baneful influence upon the national character, hindered the progress of civilization, and prevented the introduction and use of many modern improvements and inventions.

At the present day the prevailing **religion** is Mohammedanism. The first religion of this people was essentially a monotheism, in which the supreme Deity was symbolized by the sun and by fire. But in course of time the Magi, or fire-priests allowed the ceremonies to be changed and corrupted.

Then **Zoroaster** arose as a reformer. He taught the existence of a supreme God who created two other mighty beings, and imparted to them something of his

own nature. Of these, Ormuzd remained faithful to his creator, and was regarded as a spirit of light and the source of all good, while Ahriman rebelled and became a spirit of darkness and the author of all evil upon the earth. Ormuzd created man to be happy, but Ahriman interfered, and plagued man's life by creating savage beasts and poisonous plants and reptiles. In consequence of this, good and evil are now everywhere mingled together in the world, and are continually contending for the mastery in a strife that will last to the end of time. Then the spirit of light shall become everywhere victorious, and the evil spirit with all his followers be consigned to eternal darkness. The religion of Zoroaster began to prevail about the time of Cyrus, 550 B. C., and continued to flourish till the seventh century of the Christian era, when the Saracen conquest of Persia compelled many of her inhabitants to renounce their ancient faith. Some refused to abandon the faith of their fathers, and fled to the deserts of Kerman, to India and Hindustan, where their children still exist under the name of Parsees, from Pars, the ancient title of Persia. These refugees are distinguished for honesty and purity of life. The Arabs call them Guebers, or unbelievers.

Allusions to the Persian worship may be found in the poetry of Wordsworth and in the Childe Harold of Byron. In Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, the finest tale, entitled *The Fire Worshippers*, deals with the same subject. The Gueber chief exclaims :

“ Yes! I am of that impious race,  
Those slaves of Fire, that morn and even

Hail their creator's dwelling-place  
 Among the living lights of heaven;  
 Yes! I am of that outcast crew  
 To Iran and to vengeance true,  
 Who curse the hour your Arabs came  
 To desecrate our shrines of flame  
 And swear before God's burning eye,  
 To break our country's chains or die."

The history of Persia as a dominion of power and importance begins with the reign of Cyrus. Before his time the Persians were subject to the Medes. Astyages, the last Median king, alarmed by a vision of losing his crown, ordered his infant grandson to be put to death in the obscurity of a remote forest. But Cyrus escaped such a fate, owing to the compassion of the shepherd appointed to commit the murder. When he grew to manhood, he led the Persians to throw off the Median yoke, and by a brilliant succession of other victories he became the founder of an empire that embraced nearly all the civilized nations of Asia. One of his greatest achievements was capturing the city of Babylon. The Babylonians, deeming themselves perfectly safe and secure within the impregnable walls of their city, were celebrating a festival, and King Belshazzar was contemptuously defiling the sacred vessels of the captive Jews, when the Persians entered the town through the channel of the river, the waters of which they had drained off, slew the king, and subdued the country. The following poem describes Belshazzar's banquet:

## BELSHAZZAR'S BANQUET.

Belshazzar is King! Belshazzar is lord!  
 And a thousand daik nobles all bend at his board,—  
 Fruits glisten, flowers blossom, meats steam, and a flood  
 Of the wine that man loveth runs redder than blood;  
 Wild dancers are there, and a riot of mirth,  
 And the beauty that maddens the passions of earth;  
 And the crowds all shout,  
 Till the vast roofs ring,—  
 "All praise to Belshazzar, Belshazzar the King!"

“ Bring forth,” cries the monarch, “ the vessels of gold,  
 Which my father tore down from the temples of old:  
 Bring forth; and we’ll drink, while the trumpets are blown  
 To the gods of bright silver, of gold, and of stone.  
 Bring forth!”—and before him the vessels all shine,  
 And he bows unto Baal, and he drinks the dark wine;  
 While the trumpets bray,  
 And the cymbals ring,—  
 “ Praise, praise to Belshazzar, Belshazzar the King!”

Now what cometh? look, look!—without menace, or call,  
 Who writes with the lightning’s bright hand on the wall?  
 What pierceth the king, like the point of a dart?  
 What drives the bold blood from his cheek to his heart?  
 “ Chaldeans! magicians! the letters expound!”  
 They are read;—and Belshazzar is dead on the ground.

Hark!—the Persian is come  
 On a conqueror’s wing;  
 And a Mede on the throne of Belshazzar is King!  
 —*Proctor (Barry Cornwall).*

Soon after the capture of Babylon, Cyrus fell in a battle against the Massagetae. The queen of that people, smarting under the loss of a son who was slain in the battle, and thirsting for revenge, cast the head of Cyrus into a vessel filled with human blood, saying, “ I live and have conquered thee in fight; and yet by thee am I ruined, for thou tookest my son with guile; but thus I make good my threat, and give thee thy fill of blood.”

Cyrus was succeeded by **Cambyses**, one of the kings called Ahasuerus in the Bible, a man whose character was sensual and cruel. Still he extended his empire by reducing Egypt to the state of a dependent province, and by conquering a great part of northern Africa. After a violent reign of seven years, Cambyses died, some say by suicide, others by an accidental wound from his own sword, inflicted while mounting his horse.

Some time after this, seven Persian nobles conspired to raise one of their number to the throne. They agreed to meet at sunrise without the city on horseback, and to

choose that one king whose horse should be the first to neigh. **Darius Hystaspes** (521 B. C.,) secured the crown by a trick of his groom. The man brought his master's horse the evening before with a mare to the appointed place; and the next morning when the horse returned he remembered the mare and neighed; whereupon Darius was immediately saluted king. His reign of thirty-six years was distinguished by several important wars. From an expedition against the Scythian tribes dwelling beyond the Danube, he was forced to retreat with loss. He then overran Thrace and Macedonia, and next invaded the territory bordering on the Indus, which he subdued, and formed into a twentieth satrapy, under the name of India. Not content with this success, he resolved to conquer Greece. Being foiled in his first attempt by the Athenians, it is said that Darius called for a bow and shot an arrow into the air with this prayer: "Grant, O Jupiter, that I may be able to revenge myself upon the Athenians." And in order that he might never forget his purpose, he bade a servant thrice every time dinner was set before him to exclaim, "Master! remember the Athenians." He had reason to remember the Athenians, for his vast army, numbering more than 100,000 men, was subsequently defeated with great slaughter on the plains of Marathon, not far from Athens.

Shortly after this signal disaster the reign of Darius ended; and he was succeeded by his son **Xerxes**, 486 B. C. Most probably Xerxes is the same as the Ahas-

uerus, who was the husband of the faithful Jewess, Esther, whose heroic conduct is recorded in the Scriptures. This monarch renewed the attempt to subjugate the Greeks, and for this purpose he gathered a vast army and fleet; but his forces were sorely defeated, on land and sea, and he, himself, barely escaped from the scene of action in a miserable fishing-boat. After reigning twenty-one years he was assassinated. The subsequent military history of Persia is of little importance and may be continued with that of Greece.

The Persians soon lost their hardy courage and simple manners. The luxury and magnificence of the court, with its crowds of priests and officials, with its retinue of servants and guards, consumed the revenues of the country, and destroyed the prosperity of the provinces. The most distant regions were taxed to furnish the royal table with the choicest delicacies and wines. A harem of vain and intriguing women who were accustomed to lavish enormous sums upon their wardrobes and ornaments, largely increased the annual budget of expenses. The court followed the seasons, passing the winter in the mild and genial climate of Babylon, spending the spring at Susa, and avoiding the heat of summer by a residence farther north, in the cool town of Ecbatana. The satraps, or governors of the several provinces imitated the royal extravagance and greatly oppressed their defenceless subjects by their unreasonable extortions to supply the means to gratify their vicious appetites. Gradually the nation degenerated, and sank into that state of utter cor-

ruption and imbecility which has been so graphically depicted, not from a disordered imagination, but from the very life, by the author of Xenophon's historical romance.

And yet, as already intimated, the modern Persians have been awakened from their lethargic slumber and stimulated to new activity by their increased intercourse with European nations.

The **cuneiform inscriptions**, made with wedge-shaped characters, are the chief remains of the ancient Persian language. At Behistun, an ancient and ruined town, there is a remarkable limestone mountain, rising to the height of 1700 feet and almost perpendicular on one side. Here the famous queen, Semiramis, is said to have encamped on one of her travels, and having cut away the lower part of the rock, caused her portrait to be carved there. Thirteen human figures, sculptured on the rock, have been discovered here; one representing King Darius I.; and beside these figures, many long columns of Cuneiform inscriptions, which Sir H. Rawlinson has taken pains to decipher.

“The labor,” says Rawlinson, “bestowed on the whole work must have been enormous. But the real wonder of the work consists in the inscriptions. For extent, for beauty of execution, for uniformity and correctness, they are perhaps unequalled in the world. It is evident that after the engraving of the rock had been accomplished, a coating of silicious varnish had been laid on to give a

clearness of outline to each individual letter, and to protect the surface against the action of the elements." In addition to these ancient records, a few proper names and terms for vessels and garments have survived in the Bible, chiefly in the book of Daniel.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Cleopatra.*—Most kind messenger,  
Say to great Cæsar this, In disputation  
I kiss his conquering hand: tell him I am prompt  
To lay my crown at his feet, and there to kneel.  
Tell him from his all-obeying breath I hear  
The doom of Egypt.—SHAKESPEARE.

**E**GYPT. Egypt is a long and narrow strip of country, in the north-eastern part of Africa, lying on either side of the Nile and bounded by the Mediterranean and Red Seas, and by Nubia and the Great Desert. Having these fixed natural boundaries, it has had nearly the same area throughout its entire history. The length of the valley, from the cataract of Asswan to the mouth of the river, is over 500 miles, while the average breadth is 7 miles. Egypt, proper, contains about the same number of square miles as the state of California. The river Nile is the most important physical feature of Egypt and the source of its fertility. Unlike other rivers, this one receives no tributary stream for the last 1300 miles of its course. And another remarkable thing about it is its periodical overflow, whereby the adjacent tract of land is inundated and fertilized. At Thebes the water rises 36 feet, and at Cairo about 25 feet. Herodotus states that in ancient times the Nile had seven mouths, but at present there are only two, the Rosetta and the Damietta mouths. And enclosed between these two channels and the Mediterranean is a triangular ter-

ritory, known as the Delta, from its resemblance to the Greek letter of that name.

The climate of Egypt during the greater part of the year is dry and equable. In the Delta, the mean temperature of summer is about 82° Fahrenheit and that of winter 54°. For nearly two months in spring a hot scorching wind called Chamsin, or Simoon, rises in the desert and blows over Egypt. It is much dreaded by the inhabitants, as it often proves fatal to animal life, partly on account of the fine sand and suffocating dust with which it is laden, and partly on account of its heat, which sometimes reaches 126°. The north wind however, prevails for eight months of the year, and coming fresh from the sea brings health on its wings, and help to those who wish to ascend the river.

**Productions.**—Egypt is a land of most remarkable fertility. No part of the earth can boast of a richer soil. Indeed, the surface is renewed and enriched every year by the deposits from the overflow of the river. Not only wheat and barley and similar grains are produced, but also those which require a hotter climate. Cotton, sugar, and tobacco grow in abundance; and figs and oranges, and other tropical fruits flourish here. And the growth is so rapid that the same piece of land will produce two crops a year. The productiveness seems to be inexhaustible, owing to the depth and quality of the soil. In the Delta the soil is said to be fifteen feet deep. The quarries of Egypt furnish an abundance of good

building stone. In the southern part at Asswan, red granite or syenite is found, and this is the principal material used in forming the towering obelisks, and other colossal monolithic monuments of ancient Egypt. The great temples at Thebes and elsewhere, were built chiefly of sandstone, while the pyramids are constructed of limestone found in their vicinity. And there are two quite noted tracts covered with the trunks of petrified trees, one in the desert of the natron lakes, near the western border of the Delta, and the other between the Nile and Suez. Porphyry, alabaster and emeralds are also found among the stones of Egypt.

A great variety of wild animals is found here. The most common are the wolf, hyena, jackal, jerboa, antelope, and the crocodile. The latter is now seldom seen below the first cataract of the Nile. And the hippopotamus which was formerly found here has entirely disappeared. Besides the ordinary domestic animals the Egyptians own and use great numbers of camels in their trade across the deserts.

Among the birds of Egypt may be mentioned the vulture, and the eagle, the quail, the ostrich, and the Ibis.

The most important trees are the palm, the sycamore, the cypress, and the tamarisk. Among the native plants are the acacia from which gum-arabic is obtained, and the famous lotus and papyrus.

The history of Egypt is divided into three principal **periods**, namely :

1. Ancient,
2. Macedonian and Roman,
3. Mohammedan and Modern.

**Ancient Egypt.**—According to ethnologists, the early inhabitants of Egypt were the descendants of Ham, one of Noah's sons. Menes is the name of the first king who is mentioned as having ruled over this country. Poole fixes his epoch at 2717 B. C., Other chronologists think that his date was still earlier. He is said to have founded the city of Memphis, but no contemporary monuments of his reign are extant.

Sesostris, 1500 B. C., is the next monarch worthy of mention. He subdued the Ethiopians and compelled them to pay tribute, and he also conquered and ruled over a considerable portion of Africa and Asia.

Moeris, another king, is renowned for having excavated a lake, which afterwards bore his name. Herodotus considered this work superior even to the pyramids and the labyrinth. It was made for the purpose of regulating the inundation of the Nile. To show that it was entirely the work of human art, two pyramids were built in its center, rising 300 feet above the surface of the water when the lake was full, and extending an equal distance below the surface, while there rested on the summit of each a colossus, in a sitting posture. The lake is said to have been well stocked with fish, the profits of which were devoted to furnish the queen with clothes and perfume.

Moeris also constructed the famous labyrinth which Bunson considered "the most gorgeous edifice on the globe." It is said to have contained twelve palaces and 3000 saloons.

Cheops, 2170 B. C., is noted for having built the **great pyramid.** This work deserves more than a passing notice, as it is universally regarded as one of the grandest monuments in the world. Indeed the ancients counted the pyramids among the seven wonders of the world. The largest of these "memorials of the world's youth" is the pyramid of Cheops. It is 12 miles from Cairo, and 7 from the banks of the Nile, very near the southern point of the Delta. Apparently, an attempt was made to erect it on the parallel of latitude  $30^{\circ}$  N., and to direct its faces exactly towards the cardinal points. Its base covers about 13 acres, and its original height was not far from 480 feet. It has been supposed that many important truths are indicated by its form, dimensions and situation, such as the number of days in the year, the ratio of the diameter to the circumference of a circle, the distance of the sun from the earth, and the date of its construction before the birth of Christ.

And accordingly Piazzi Smyth and others have thought and claimed that it was "built for higher purposes than sepulture, which was undoubtedly the object of the remaining pyramids." Some scholars even do not hesitate to believe that its builder was divinely aided and instructed in its erection, and Melchizedek has been named as the heaven-appointed architect. Professor Piazzi Smyth may be mistaken in his deductions; in studying the subject he may have allowed too much freedom to his fancy and imagination: but certainly no one can deny that the great pyramid is a most extraordinary model of

constructive skill. It is not simply a mass of piled-up stones. The joints between the casing-stones are almost imperceptible. They match so closely that a sheet of paper cannot be inserted between them. The passages leading to the interior chambers were made perfectly smooth, and nothing was allowed to remain and arrest the sarcophagus. The most exquisite finish was given to everything.

But how were these great blocks of stones placed in position at their various heights until the top stone was put upon the summit and the gigantic work completed?

In answer to this question Poole says, "the most reasonable conjecture that can be offered is that inclined planes ran along the sides of the giant steps in which the pyramid was built, and that the stones were dragged up them by the workmen."

It is said that 100,000 men were employed for 40 years in building it. They were probably slaves who received no wages. The Israelites may have helped to build some of the pyramids, though not this one; for, if the date of this one be 2170 B. C., as above stated, it was erected about 700 years prior to their bondage.

An inscription on it in Egyptian characters states how much had been expended in furnishing radishes, garlicks, and onions to the workmen. The sum amounted to \$1,700,000 of our money. Doubtless all such statements are to be taken with a grain of allowance. The oriental habit of exaggeration, not to say of mendacity, is well known. The pyramids were principally

designed to serve as sepulchres for the dead, where the bodies of the royal family might be preserved in security during their appointed term, at the end of which they would be resurrected and again inhabited by their spirits. The ancient Egyptians believed in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. They imagined that the departed spirit was doomed for a period of 3000 years to occupy various animal forms and to lead a more or less wretched existence according to his deserts, till he was permitted to return and resume his human body and enter again upon a new life on the earth. Thus arose the custom of embalming the bodies of the dead, and of taking such care to preserve them in air-tight cases or in the endless wrappings of the mummy, and to deposit them out of the reach of the river in these dry pyramids, and there hermetically seal and hide them from the prying curiosity of man and the hungry search of the wild beast.

**The Sphinx** is another attractive monument of this strange country. The most noted one is near the great pyramid. It is a monster, sixty feet high, with the body of a lion and a human head, and may be considered, therefore, as emblematic of the union of physical force and intellectual power required to plan and build such mighty monuments, which have resisted the wear and the war of the elements for so many centuries, which have outlasted so many generations of men, and which seem destined to survive and tower above the wrecks of time itself.

**The Obelisk** is still another variety of monument from this wonderful region. It is a towering monolithic column, with square base and tapering shaft ending in a pyramidal top. Its sides are covered with vertical lines of hieroglyphics recording the titles and merits of the person by whom it was dedicated, and of the deity to whom it was sacred. Obelisks were usually erected in pairs before a doorway. They were quarried in the southern part of Egypt, and floated down the rivers on rafts to their destination, where it is supposed they were set up by means of inclined planes. Many of these curious trophies of antiquity have been carried to distant lands.

The tallest, that of the Lateran at Rome, is 106 feet high; and the shortest, that of the Florence Museum, is about 6 feet in height. The one in the *Place de la Concorde*, Paris, is from Luxor. The one recently erected in Central Park, New York, was brought from Alexandria; and its companion, which was removed to London a few years ago, was known as Cleopatra's Needle. The pair were originally erected before the temple of the sun at Heliopolis, where they stood for eighteen centuries before they were transported to Alexandria at the beginning of the Christian era. According to Greek and Roman writers the obelisk represents a sunbeam.

Wilkinson draws the following reasonable inference respecting their design: "The Egyptians naturally looked on those monuments with feelings of veneration, being connected with their religion and the glorious

memory of their monarchs; and at the same time perceived that in buildings constructed as their temples were, the monotony of numerous horizontal lines required a relief of this kind."

**Thebes.**—The buildings next in importance to the pyramids are the palace-temples of Thebes in the southern part of Egypt. The remains of this once magnificent city lie on both sides of the river Nile, and extend two or three miles along the river and the same distance across the valley. The most imposing of these ruins are found at Karnak and Luxor, on the eastern shore. The great palace-temple at Karnak was the grandest structure of the kind in the world. The avenues leading to it were lined with rows of Colossal sphinxes, and at the entrances stood lofty obelisks and stupendous gateways adorned with sculptures most wonderful to behold. There were so many of these gateways or triumphal arches that Homer calls Thebes "the hundred-gated city." The Hall of the Gods is 330 feet long and 164 feet wide. On each side near the wall is a row of 134 columns, each a monolith 43 feet high with a diameter of 12 feet. In the center of the hall are two other rows of monolithic columns 72 feet high, thus dividing the hall into a nave with two side aisles. \* "All were roofed, the nave of course higher than the aisles. The ceiling of all was of massive hewn flat stone; it has long since fallen to the ground. All the columns have

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\*W. H. Seward's *Travels around the World*.

highly-wrought and magnificent capitals, no two of them alike in design." Some were adorned with the figures of birds and the branching foliage of the flowering lotus; while others were devoted to mythology and history. Only a faint light admitted through small grated windows was allowed to relieve the darkness of the interior. "The mysterious gloom, which must have originally pervaded the chamber has passed away, and it now seems merely an endless and confused forest of columns which has been swept and desolated by the tempest." But considering the age of these ruins—they are more than 33 centuries old—they are remarkably well preserved. This no doubt is owing to the clear dry climate of the Nile. On no part of the ruin can be found "ivy or moss, mould or stain." One of the bass-reliefs sculptured on the outer walls represents a victorious king returning to Thebes with a train of prisoners in chains. Another scene shows how he is welcomed by his ministers and courtiers on the banks of the Nile, while crowds of crocodiles gaze with awe and wonder at the strange sight.

On the west bank of the river are two majestic statues, and the remains of many more which once were seated along the approach to the beautiful palace of a king. They are known as the statues of Memnon, and they bear the name and titles of Amenophis III, about 1400 B. C. One of them gave out musical sounds at sunrise, which were believed to be the morning salutations of Memnon to his mother Eos or Aurora. Much speculation has

been caused by this harp-like music or tone which sounded forth from the top of the statue.

Several explanations have been suggested. The Egyptians from the remotest ages have been noted for mechanical skill. In the time of Moses their priests could imitate miracles and perform many magical and wonderful tricks. Now it is likely that they ingeniously contrived to put some *Æolian* harp or other musical instrument into the head of Memnon and caused it to play by clock-work or otherwise at the rising and setting of the sun. One writer attributes the sound to the expansion of the stone by the heat of the sun.

These ruins prove that the ancient Egyptian artists and architects possessed a noble sense of proportions. Their sculpture never wearies the beholder by its grandeur, while the admirer of the beautiful will often be delighted by form, color, delicate carving and the perfection of taste exhibited in the ornamentation.

Clarence Cook, who is a recognized authority in matters of architecture, says that "any notice of the Egyptian buildings of this period that should fail to hint at their beauty would leave an incomplete impression, but we too often find this praise forgotten in the wonder excited by their stupendous feats of building."

**Pharos.**—At the death of Alexander the Great, who in his victorious career had conquered the world, Egypt fell to Ptolemy Soter as his share of the conquest. He built on the island of Pharos in the bay of Alexandria

a tower which was reckoned by the ancients among the seven wonders of the world.

It was constructed of white marble and rose to the lofty height of 400 feet. Its several stories were adorned with columns galleries and balustrades, all exhibiting the exquisite finish of the finest workmanship. On the top, there were fires which were kept constantly burning in the night in order to warn and direct the sailors how to avoid or encounter the dangers and difficulties of the bay. This lighthouse is said to have cost the king 800 talents or nearly a million dollars.

The following inscription translated from the Greek was cut into the marble of the tower: *Sostratus the Cnidian, son of Dexiphanes, to the gods the preservers, for the benefit of mariners.* Sostratus was the architect, and the story is told of him that wishing in after ages to enjoy all the merit and glory of the work, he deeply cut the above inscription and covered it over as he proceeded with cement upon which he wrote another inscription ascribing the honor of building the tower to King Ptolemy who was rightly entitled to the credit of the work. The cement, however, crumbled away and with it the monarch's name disappeared and the other became visible.

No remains of this famous tower are known to exist at the present day. Ptolemy also founded the celebrated **library at Alexandria** which is said at one time to have contained 700,000 volumes embracing the whole

Greek and Latin literature, of which we possess only fragments. His son and successor Ptolemy Philadelphus, so called because he married his own sister, invited learned men to reside at his capital and generously patronized literary works.

During his reign the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. This is the earliest Greek translation and is known as the **Septuagint** version from the seventy scholars engaged upon the work. Josephus repeats an old fabulous account of its origin to the effect that King Ptolemy, at the instance of his librarian, sent to Jerusalem to procure from the high priest a copy of the Jewish Law, and to make arrangements for a Greek translation of the same to be added to his great library. The high priest at once entered into the project, chose seventy-two learned men, six from each tribe, and sent them to Egypt with a splendid copy of the Law written on parchment in letters of gold. As soon as they arrived at Alexandria they retired to the Island of Pharos, and having been shut up there in separate cells they worked independently for seventy-two days and then came forth and compared their several versions and found a result wonderful to tell, namely all the translations agreed exactly *verbatim et literatim*.

The early Christian Fathers who delighted to recount this marvelous tale with embellishments devised by their vivid imaginations, do not hesitate to assert that the translators were fitted for the task by being divinely

inspired. Whether or not this be true the legend surely serves to show the high estimation in which the version was held by scholars at the beginning of the Christian era.

**Rosetta Stone.**—At Rosetta a town on the western side of the Delta a French officer of engineers in 1799 found a stone with a trilingual inscription upon it. The slab, which is now in the British Museum, is of black basalt about a yard square and ten inches thick. This famous discovery furnished the key for deciphering the hieroglyphs on the monuments. “The same text is repeated first in hieroglyphics, secondly in enchorial characters, lastly in Greek; but the stone is so mutilated at the corners and one edge, that the first part of the hieroglyphic text and the last part of the Greek are lost, as well as the beginning of several lines of the enchorial.” After years of study Dr. Young and M. Champollion succeeded in finding the key and deciphering the hieroglyphs.

Bunsen regarded this as the greatest discovery of the century; for by means of it a flood of light has been thrown upon ancient Egyptian history.

Lepsius in 1866 discovered a larger and better preserved trilingual inscription at San, but of course it will never be as famous as that of the Rosetta Stone, which was the first to furnish the key.

**Phoenix.**—Among the birds held sacred by the Egyptians was one called the Phoenix. The fabulous account of it as given in Latin poetry and history makes it a very marvelous bird indeed. It springs from the ashes of its father. Its food consists of neither fruit nor flowers but of frankincense and odoriferous gums. After living five hundred years it builds a nest on the top of a palm tree and there breathes its life away amidst the sweet fragrance of cinnamon, spikenard and myrrh.

Then the young Phœnix comes forth and when it has gained sufficient strength it lifts the nest and carries it away to the city of Heliopolis to the temple of the sun, and lays it on the altar to be consumed in flames of fragrance.

Herodotus describes the bird though he confesses that he never saw it. He says it was like the eagle in outline and size with gray plumage of crimson and gold.

A modern writer assigns as a reason for the rare appearance of the Phœnix that instinct teaches it to keep out of the sight of man, the tyrant of creation, for if discovered some wealthy glutton would surely kill and devour it though there were no more to be had in all the world.

**Cleopatra.**—The Ptolemies ruled Egypt from 323 B. C. to 31 B. C., and the last of the line was the famous queen Cleopatra.

Every historian who has attempted to portray her character, has paid glowing tributes to her beauty, talents and accomplishments. Besides being proficient in music, she understood Latin and Greek and could hold conversation with Ethiopians, Arabians, Jews, Syrians, Medes, and Persians without an interpreter. To claim that she was perfect and blameless in all her conduct would be false and foolish. But her most glaring frailties must be ascribed to the absurd marriage customs of her day, rather than to innate depravity and baseness of nature.

The usage of the Egyptian court compelled her to marry her oldest brother and share the throne with him, an abominable regulation which no doubt was the chief cause of her subsequent wayward career. An insurrection drove her to seek refuge in Syria and when it was quelled she learned that her brother-husband was plotting against her life and trying to usurp her share of the kingdom. It was at this crisis that she had recourse to the stratagem of being conveyed through the hostile lines and into the presence of Cæsar in the form of a large bale of goods. He settled the matter for the time with the king. But soon a second revolt broke out in which Ptolemy lost his life by drowning and then Cleopatra was forced to marry a younger brother only eleven years old and take him as a colleague on the throne. Is it any wonder that under such circumstances this fair and fascinating princess found relief and pleasure in the society of the brilliant Cæsar?

A few years afterwards she succeeded in making another celebrated conquest when she completely won the heart of Mark Antony.

It seems that Antony ordered her to meet him in Cilicia and answer, if she could, some charges which had been made against her conduct. The meeting which she gave him has been described by the pen of the historian and also by the prince of English dramatists.

Plutarch says: "She sailed along the river Cydnus in a most magnificent galley. The stern was covered with gold, the sails were of purple, and the oars were silver. These in their motion kept time to the music of flutes and pipes and harps. The queen in the dress and character of Venus lay under a canopy embroidered with gold, of the most exquisite workmanship; while boys, like painted cupids, stood fanning her on each side of the sofa. Her maids were of the most distinguished beauty and, habited like the Nereids and the Graces, assisted in the steerage and conduct of the vessel. The fragrance of burning incense was diffused along the shores, which were covered with multitudes of people. Some followed the procession; and such numbers went down from the city to see it that Antony was at last left alone on the tribunal. A rumor was soon spread that Venus was come to feast with Bacchus for the benefit of Asia. Antony sent to invite her to supper, but she thought it his duty to wait upon her, and to show his politeness on her arrival he complied."

She met the illustrious Roman commander and led

him captive at her will. By the irresistible charms of her manners, by the sweet music of her voice, and by her loving and artful companionship she enchain'd his affections, lulled his proud ambition to sleep, and induc'd him to lead a life of disgraceful dissipation at her court and banish from his mind and memory the claims of his country and his honor. But at length the end came. Their forces suffered defeat at the battle of Actium. Antony committed suicide and Cleopatra, fearing that she might be forced to grace the victor's triumph, is thought to have followed her fond lover's example in taking her own life.

The only mark of violence which could be found on her person was a small puncture in one arm; and it was therefore supposed that the unhappy queen had procur'd death either by the bite of an asp or by the self-inflicted thrust of a poisoned bodkin.

During the early days of Christianity Egypt was greatly disturbed by religious wars and tumults. In 640 A. D. the Mohammedans invaded and conquered Egypt and the victorious general bore testimony to the greatness of Alexandria by reporting to the Caliph Omar that "he had taken a city which beggared all description, in which he found 4000 palaces, 400 theatres," etc. Since then Egypt has been the scene of many bloody and convulsive struggles. Fatimites, crusaders, Mamelukes, Ottoman Turks, and the French have in turn fought for the sovereignty.

In 1804 Mehemet Ali was appointed pasha of Cairo—the modern capital of Egypt. He exercised nearly absolute power though he was nominally a vassal of the Turkish Sultan; and subsequently by a treaty the vice-royalty was made hereditary in his family.

In 1867 the Turkish government bestowed upon the regent of Egypt the title of Khedive. In 1882 England interfered and quickly quelled a revolt against the authority of the Khedive. After the war was ended Arabi Pasha, the leader of the revolt, was arrested and handed over to the English.

## CHAPTER X.

“Where each old poetic mountain  
Inspiration breathes around.”

**G**REECE.—The peninsula of Greece is smaller than most of the states of the American Union; its greatest length being not more than 250 miles and its width in the broadest part about 180 miles. The chief divisions were Epirus and Thessaly in the north, Hellas in the middle, and Peloponnesus in the south. The modern name for the latter division is Morea, so called from its resemblance in outline to a mulberry leaf. The former title means the island of Pelops, from which it appears that the ancients disregarded the isthmus of Corinth, the narrow neck of land that joins this part with the main land and converts it into a peninsula.

The physical features of the country exercised an important influence in moulding the character of its people. Separated into many small tribes by mountain barriers they learned to love liberty, and at the same time, dwelling as they did on the shores of the sea, they had easy intercourse with their neighbors and with the surrounding nations. A deep obscurity hangs over the early history of Greece. It is hard and often impossible to find the truth among the myths and fables. Any one who reads the legends of the Greeks and studies

their traditions will need the keenest judgment to distinguish between fact and fiction and yet with the greatest care in some cases he will be likely to make mistakes.

### Origin of the Greeks.

It seems probable that the Greeks are a part of an Aryan migration which also spread over the other Mediterranean peninsulas of Italy and Spain, and that they are descended from Javan or Ion, the fourth son of Japheth. They, however, trace their origin to Hellen and from him they call their land Hellas and themselves Hellenes.

Hellen was reputed to be the son of Deucalion who with his wife Pyrrha, as the story goes, was saved from a flood which drowned all the other inhabitants. When the waters subsided they came forth from the ship and offered sacrifices to Jupiter and prayed that the earth might be filled again with people, and in answer to their prayer they were bidden to vail their faces, unbind their garments, and cast behind them the bones of their mother. Startled by such a command, not knowing at first how to interpret it, they spent some time in trying to hit upon the right meaning. At length they concluded that the earth is the great mother of all and that the stones are her bones. Accordingly they obeyed the command and, strange to tell, the stones they threw became soft and assumed the human shape. Those from

Deucalion's hand rose up as men while those from Pyrrha's became women.

Hellen had three sons, Aeolus, Dorus and Xuthus, and the latter had a son by the name of Ion the father of the Ionians. Deucalion, Hellen and Ion are perhaps identical with Noah, Japheth and Javan of the Bible. Dorus was the progenitor of the Dorians. And *Æolus* has been identified with the god of the winds, Boreas, Auster, Eurus, and Zephyr, the north, south, east and west winds respectively. He is also the deity for whom the *Æolian* harp is named because he sweeps its strings with his invisible breath.

Another story accounts for an **Egyptian colony** at Argos. Two brothers Danaus and *Ægyptus* quarrel, and the result is that Danaus with his fifty daughters is obliged to flee from his home in Egypt and take refuge in Argos. Afterwards the fifty sons of *Ægyptus* follow them across the sea and entreat their uncle to forgive and forget past injuries and give them their fair cousins in marriage. He assents to their proposals but at the same time prepares for revenge by giving his daughters each a dagger and charging them to slay in the night the unsuspecting bridegrooms.

All but one executed the cruel orders and in consequence, though they escaped punishment in this life, they were condemned in the lower world to draw water for ever in sieves.

The daughters herein alluded to may signify springs of

water found in Argos. In the figurative language of the Orient, springs are often termed daughters of the earth. Moreover the maids are said to have cut off the heads of their lovers. Head is a common name for fountain. And some see in the flow of the water a reference to the welling forth of the life-current when the bloody deed was done.

Still another story tells how Greece was peopled with inhabitants. **Europa**, a beautiful princess of Phoenicia, while gathering flowers near the seashore, discovered a white bull remarkably tame and gentle. She fondled and caressed him, hung wreaths upon his horns and at length dared to mount his back. No sooner had she done so, than he darted away, plunged into the sea and swam with her to the island of Crete.

Europe was named after her by her friends who came thither from Asia to search for her.

**Cadmus** her brother traveled far and near to find her and finally came to Greece to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. Here he was told to cease the search and directed to build a city. But first he had to encounter and kill a dragon and sow its teeth in the ground. This done, there sprang up forthwith a crop of bold warriors who fought and killed one another till only five remained alive. These made friends and aided Cadmus in building the famous city of Thebes. The Greeks were indebted to Cadmus for the alphabet of 16 letters.

### Three Distinguished Heroes.

**Hercules.**—From early infancy Hercules was renowned for extraordinary personal strength. When only ten months old he strangled with his hands two hideous serpents which had crawled into his cradle to devour him.

He owed his education mainly to the wise and good Chiron, the chief of the Centaurs, a fabulous race having horses' bodies and human heads.

When he grew up to be a man, Virtue and Vice appeared to him and each offered to be his guide. Virtue promised to lead him through many hard trials to a glorious seat at last among the gods; whilst Vice tried to induce him to follow her by the promise of present delight, showing him a pathway strown with flowers, holding to his lips the sparkling wine-cup, inviting him to dance and enjoy a smooth and happy life. But the youth had been well trained and was not to be deceived. Unlike Samson, he chose Virtue for his leader, though his subsequent career proves that he did not always adhere very closely to his choice.

Having been fully equipped by the gods he proceeded to perform the mighty exploits which have become proverbial. He killed the Nemean lion, destroyed the many-headed hydra, caught the swift stag that had the golden horns, captured the wild boar, cleansed the Augean stables, shot the birds of prey, brought a white bull from Crete, secured the Thracian mares which fed on human flesh, obtained a girdle from the queen of the

Amazons, slew the monster Geryon, carried away the apples from the garden of the Hesperides, seized and conveyed the three-headed dog Cerberus from the lower world. These are commonly known as the twelve wonderful labors of Hercules.

The hero performed many other feats some of which were quite as marvellous as those above mentioned.

At times he was possessed with an ungovernable madness, and in one of these spells he slew his friend Iphitus. For this offence he was condemned to be the slave of the queen of Lydia for three years. During this period of servitude, his nature seemed to change. He became effeminate, wore female attire and often sat spinning by the side of the queen with her women. Furthermore the once brave man is said to have received chastisement sometimes from the hand of the royal mistress, "who arrayed in his lion-skin and armed with his club, playfully struck him with her sandal for his awkward way of holding the distaff."

At last the hero met his death by clothing himself with a robe which had been secretly saturated with poison. And when he attempted to wrench off the garment it stuck to his flesh so that he could not remove it without frightfully lacerating his body. In his agony he seized Lichas, the messenger who had brought him the fatal tunic, and hurled him into the sea.

At death his mortal part was consumed to ashes on the funeral pyre, while his lofty spirit went to dwell

among the stars and to be united in marriage with Hebe the goddess of youth.

As to the meaning of the story a scholiast on Hesiod remarks: "The zodiac in which the sun performs his annual course, is the true career which Hercules traverses in the fable of the twelve labors, and his marriage with Hebe the goddess of youth, whom he espoused after he had ended his labors, denotes the renewal of the year at the end of each solar revolution."

The poet Schiller thus alludes to the ascension of Hercules:

"Till the god, the earthly part forsaken,  
From the man in flames asunder taken,  
Drank the heavenly ether's purer breath.  
Joyous in the new unwonted lightness,  
Soared he upwards to celestial brightness,  
Earth's dark heavy burden lost in death.  
High Olympus gives harmonious greeting  
To the hall where reigns his sire adored;  
Youth's bright goddess, with a blush at meeting,  
Gives the nectar to her lord."

**Perseus.**—The Greeks believed that their heroes were the sons of the gods. Perseus was reputed to be the son of Jupiter and Danae, the daughter of the King of Argos. When he was a little babe with bright eyes and beautiful golden hair, he and his mother were shut up in a chest and cast into the sea.

But the winds and the waves, more merciful than the king who ordered the cruel act to be done, carried the box with its precious burden to a small island where a kind-hearted fisherman drew it ashore and conveyed the

mother and child to Polydectes, the ruler of the country to which they had come.

Years afterwards when Perseus had grown to manhood, the king managed to send him to the confines of the world to bring from thence the head of Medusa, a horrible monster. She was one of the Gorgons, once a beautiful maiden who dared to boast that her face was fairer than that of Minerva. To punish her vain presumption, the goddess changed her hair, the chief of her charms, into hissing serpents, and overspread her face with such a frightful aspect as to petrify every living thing that chanced to look upon it.

Nevertheless Perseus bravely prepared to go upon the dangerous mission. The gods came to his aid and furnished him a shield as bright as a mirror, and winged shoes, and a short curved sword and directed him how to achieve success in his perilous adventure.

They first guided him to the abode of the Graiae, the three gray maids who lived so far out upon the borders of creation that the light of the sun and moon never fell upon them. They were such horrid old hags that they only had one eye and one tooth among them, which they used in turn. While the eye was being passed from one to another Perseus intercepted it and declined to return it till they promised to show him the way to the Nymphs, who kept the magic wallet, and the helmet of Pluto which rendered its wearer invisible.

Having obtained these requisite aids, Perseus came upon the Gorgons while they were asleep and taking

care not to look upon them but only to view their images reflected upon his bright shield, he cut off the head of Medusa, put it in the wallet, and escaped.

The two sisters awoke and pursued him in vain as concealed by the helmet he mounted into the air and flew so swiftly away upon the winged shoes.

On his return he punished Atlas, the mighty giant who supported the heavens upon his broad shoulders, for refusing to show him hospitality, by changing him into a mountain. One glance at the head of Medusa wrought the wondrous transformation.

But the adventures of the hero were not yet over. As he continued his homeward flight he came to *A*ethiopia where he found a beautiful princess called Andromeda, chained to a rock. Her mother had boasted that she was fairer than the Nereids, the sea-nymphs, and thereby offended Neptune the god of the sea, who took revenge by sending a sea-monster to ravage the land and devour the cattle and people. Andromeda was to be sacrificed to the monster in order to appease the angry deity.

Perseus at once came to the rescue. Hearing the monster coming, he bade the maiden to close her eyes and then he drew forth the Gorgon's head and instantly turned her foe to stone, cleft the lady's chains, and restored her to her parents, who out of gratitude rewarded the hero with her hand in marriage. One of her former suitors behaved so insolently at the feast on that occasion that Perseus felt obliged to change him also into stone.

Perseus then took his bride and returned home where he arrived in time to deliver his mother from unwelcome attentions. The face of Medusa immediately petrified her persecutors.

Having now accomplished the object of his journey the hero returned the borrowed outfit and gave the Gorgon's head to Minerva, who placed it on her shield or aegis as she always called it.

Afterwards while pitching a game of quoits he had the misfortune to hit and kill his grandfather, thus fulfilling an early prediction. He reigned many years and lived happily with Andromeda. At death they were supposed to be translated to the sky where they appear now among the northern constellations.

This story of Perseus does not belong exclusively to the Greeks. It is told by many nations with variations.

The English form of it appears in the tale of "Jack the Giant-Killer," who wore seven-leagued boots and a cap of mist and rescued fair ladies from their enemies.

**Theseus.**—One of the most celebrated heroes of Greece was Theseus, the son of Aegeus or Neptune, king of Athens, and *Æthra*, daughter of a neighboring monarch at Troezene. He was reared in his grandfather's palace and when he attained the age of manhood he was to proceed to Athens and present himself before his father.

When his mother thought the proper time had come, she led him to a huge mass of rock, under which his

father had hidden a sword and a pair of shoes, and bade him test his strength by removing the stone, and then he could secure the objects which he would need for his journey and which would prove his identity to his sire.

Theseus rolled away the rock with ease and found the sword and shoes and at once resolved to depart for Athens and to go by land, though strongly advised by his friends to take the shorter and safer route by water and avoid the roads which were known to be infested with fierce robbers.

But the spirit of the hero courted adventure. He determined to distinguish himself like Hercules, with whose fame all Greece then rang, by destroying the thieves and monsters that ravaged the country and terrified travelers.

On the way to Athens, among other deeds which he performed, he slew two notorious robbers, Sciron and Procrustes, serving them as they had served all previous comers. The former he hurled over a precipice to be dashed to pieces on the rocks below as he had invariably treated his unlucky victims.

Procrustes had an iron bed upon which he had placed all persons that fell into his hands, and cut off or stretched out their limbs till they fitted the length of the bed. Theseus tried the same fatal experiment on the old scoundrel and thus rid the land of a long dreaded scourge.

The youth then pursued his way to Athens, where in due time he was recognized by the king as his son.

It seems that Athens at this period was subject to Crete, and was required every year to send a tribute of seven youths and seven maidens to be devoured by the **Minotaur**, a frightful monster half bull and half man. This horrid creature was kept in a labyrinth where there were so many winding paths that no one who once entered it could find his way out without assistance.

When the next tribute was made up, Theseus volunteered to go and free his country from the intolerable human tax or die in the attempt, telling his father that if he succeeded in killing the Minotaur as he hoped to do, he would change the black sails of the ship for white ones on his triumphant return.

When he arrived at Crete he was presented at the royal court with his companions, and there he won the heart of the king's daughter, Ariadne, who gave him a clew of thread, by means of which he penetrated in safety the mazes of the labyrinth till he encountered and killed the Minotaur. He then followed the thread to the entrance of the labyrinth where he had fastened one end of it.

Thus havinge scaped, he re-embarked, taking Ariadne with hin, whom he soon deserted and left on the isle of Naxos, whether because he was tired of her or because he really believed that he was divinely directed so to do is uncertain.

But while the princess was weeping over this cruelty, Venus came to comfort her; and shortly afterwards Bacchus gave her a golden crown, which is visible among the stars on a summer night.

On approaching the coast of Attica, Theseus forgot the promised signal; and thereupon his father, seeing the ship returning with black sails and thinking his brave son had perished in the hardy undertaking, fell down from the cliff where he was watching and was drowned just as Theseus sailed safely into port.

The hero now turned his attention to the government, to which he succeeded by the death of his father. He abolished the division of the people into tribes and substituted that of three classes, the nobles, the husbandmen, and the artisans. He reserved all the offices of state for the nobles, who were farther clothed with the privilege of controlling the affairs of religion and interpreting the laws both divine and human. As a further means of uniting the people and promoting their happiness he established numerous festivals, some of which were celebrated with great splendor.

Under his wise administration, the city grew and his subjects prospered. Civic cares however did not entirely absorb his thoughts. He found time to engage in military enterprises. One of his victorious expeditions was against the Amazons whose queen he carried off and married.

Theseus also shared the dangers of the Calydonian hunt, joined the Argonauts in quest of the golden fleece, fought against the centaurs, seized and carried away captive the beautiful Helen, sister of Castor and Pollux, and even had the hardihood to unite with a friend in the perilous attempt to abduct Proserpina from the palace

of Pluto. The result of the last foolhardy adventure was that he was caught and imprisoned by the monarch of Hades till the visit of Hercules to the lower regions, when he was released from durance vile by that hero.

In his latter days Theseus suffered exile, the fate of all great Athenians. He retired to the island of Scyros and there lost his life, either by accident or by the treachery of his host, king Lycomedes; for having ascended a lofty rock to enjoy a wider view of his surroundings, he either fell or was pushed off and dashed to pieces on the stones below.

In a later age the Athenian general Cimon discovered his remains and had them removed to Athens and deposited in a temple named for him the Theseum and erected in his honor. The festivities attending the nuptials of Theseus and Hippolyta, the queen of the Amazons, are described in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.\* And a poem by Mrs. Heinans is founded on the ancient Greek tradition that the "Shade of Theseus" appeared to encourage his countrymen at the battle of Marathon.

The recumbent Ariadne of the Vatican is said to be one of the finest pieces of sculpture in Italy. It represents her asleep and abandoned by ungrateful Theseus. The festival which he instituted in honor of Minerva the patron goddess of Athens, forms the subject of the bas-

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\* "Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,  
And won thy love doing thee injuries;  
But I will wed thee in another key,  
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling."

reliefs which once embellished the exterior of the Parthenon. A considerable portion of these sculptures is now on exhibition in the British Museum among those known as the "Elgin Marbles."

Theseus appears in the character of semi-historical personage, the model of a just and moderate ruler, setting an example before his people of strict obedience to the laws, ever ready to espouse the cause of the weak against their oppressors, always a terror and a scourge to evil-doers, the king who invented and established so many wise and excellent regulations.

## CHAPTER XI.

“ Ye gods! what wonders has Ulysses wrought!  
What fruits his conduct and his courage yield!  
Great in the council, glorious in the field.”—POPE.

[GREECE CONTINUED.]

**THREE FAMOUS EXPEDITIONS.**—The voyage of the Argonauts, the Seven against Thebes, and the Siege of Troy are three most noted events which happened before the dawn of authentic Grecian history.

The first of these, the **Voyage of the Argonauts**, was an expedition the object of which according to tradition was to recover the golden fleece. Athamas and Nephele, a king and queen of Thessaly, had two children, a boy and a girl. After a while the king having grown weary of his wife put her away and took another.

The divorced queen fearing for the safety of her children if they should fall into the hands of a step-mother, took measures to remove them out of her reach. Mercury came to her aid and furnished her a winged ram with a fleece of pure gold. Nephele placed her two children on the back of the ram trusting that he would carry them away to a place of safety.

The ram vaulted into the air and flew eastward; but in crossing the strait between Europe and Asia the girl, whose name was Helle, fell off and was drowned in the

sea which thenceforth was called after her the Helle-spont—now the Dardanelles. The ram continued his flight till he came to the kingdom of Colchis on the eastern shore of the Black sea.

After being safely landed the boy sacrificed the ram to Jupiter and gave the golden fleece to the king of the country, who nailed it to a tree in a consecrated grove and had it guarded by a sleepless dragon.

Years afterwards a great expedition was fitted out under the command of Jason, a young Grecian prince, to go in quest of this treasure and if possible bring it back to Greece, to which country it was considered rightly to belong. The ship built for the occasion was capable of carrying fifty men, and was called Argo, from the name of the builder. Of course, compared with the largest modern ships, such a vessel as the Argo seems very small, but to the Greeks of that early date it seemed a gigantic affair, as hitherto they had only used small boats or canoes hollowed out from the trunks of trees.

The report of its great size and the purpose for which it was being constructed, was circulated throughout Greece, and by the time it was completed all the most famous heroes then living had come to see the mighty vessel and join in the enterprise. Among the number were Hercules, Theseus, and Orpheus, the latter being the most renowned musician of that heroic age. When he played on the lyre, the music was so sweet that nothing could resist the charm of it. Not only men but

wild beasts were spell-bound, and even the rocks and trees gathered round and listened to his notes with a transport of delight. Pope, in his Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, thus speaks of Orpheus, whom he calls the Thracian :

"So when the first bold vessel dares the seas,  
High on the stern the Thracian raised his strain;  
While Argo saw her kindred trees  
Descend from Pelion to the main,  
Transported demigods stood round,  
And men grew heroes at the sound."

When all things were ready, the brave adventurers launched the vessel and departed on their perilous undertaking. At the entrance of the Black Sea there were two small rocky islands floating on the surface, and these were called Symplegades or Clashing Islands, because they often clashed together and ground to atoms any object that happened to be caught between them.

Having arrived at this dangerous strait, the Argonauts let go a dove, which took her way safely between the rocks, only losing a few feathers from her tail. Then Jason and his men, watching the rebound of the rocks, seized the favorable moment, rowed with all their might, and passed through just in time to escape serious loss, as the islands instantly dashed together behind them and slightly grazed the stern of their vessel.

A learned mythologist suggests that this may be a corrupt account of the story of Noah and the ark. The name Argo favors this idea, and the incident of the dove confirms it.

At length, after various adventures, Jason and his companions arrived at Colchis, and requested the king to surrender the golden fleece. The king consented to do so, on condition that Jason should yoke to the plow two fire-breathing bulls with brazen feet, and break up a piece of land and sow it with the teeth of the dragon which Cadmus had slain at Thebes.

Jason agreed to the terms, and a day was set for trying the experiment. Meanwhile Jason won the heart of Medea, the king's daughter, who was a potent sorceress, and by her help he succeeded in accomplishing the task imposed.

She furnished him a charm to protect him alike against fire and steel, and directed him how he could safely encounter the bulls and the weapons of the armed men who would spring up as a crop on the field where the dragon's teeth were sown.

At the appointed time a great multitude assembled to witness the decisive trial. The bulls rushed in, breathing forth fire which burned up the grass as they passed along. Jason met them boldly and stroked them with fearless hand and quickly slipped the yoke upon them and, regardless of their flaming breath, proceeded to plow the ground and sow the teeth to the utter amazement of the Colchians and the extreme, though trembling delight of his friends.

Soon the crop of warriors sprang up; and they hardly reached the surface before they began to brandish their weapons and attack the hero, who valiantly defended

himself and kept his foes at bay with his sword and shield till his strength began to fail and then he seized a stone and cast it into the midst of his assailants. Thereupon they turned their arms against one another and fought till the last of the dragon's brood was slain. Medea was elated by the victory and the Greeks embraced their hero with joy.

It now remained to put to sleep the dragon that guarded the fleece. This Orpheus accomplished with his lyre while Jason took down the golden fleece, the long coveted prize, and carried it off.

The historical meaning of this legend is doubtless that the Greeks held some intercourse with the Colchians and other tribes dwelling around the Black Sea. The mountain streams of Colchis were said to have washed down fine particles of gold and this was lodged upon fleeces which the natives dipped into the water for that purpose. The fire-breathing bulls are supposed to mean a savage band of Taurians who guarded the golden sands of their coast against the depredations of foreigners, and the sleepless dragon that watched the fleece was simply a man by the name of Draco who may have been the captain of the coast-guard.

**The Seven against Thebes.**—Laius, the king of Thebes, was warned by an oracle not to beget children or he would die by the hand of his son. He neglected the prediction, and after his wife Jocasta had given birth to a son he sought to avoid the fulfillment of the

prophecy. To this end the father immediately delivered the infant to his herdsman to expose on a mountain.

But through the tender compassion of the servant, the babe instead of being left to perish from exposure fell into the hands of the wife of Polybus, king of Corinth, who being childlesss adopted it and brought it up as her own and named it Œdipus or Swollen-foot; for the father before abandoning it had pierced its ankles and inserted a leathern thong through the wound.

Œdipus grew to manhood, and had every reason to believe that he was the son and heir of king Polybus, till at a banquet he was stung by reproaches about his origin. He then besought his supposed mother to inform him of the truth; but unable to get any satisfactory information from her, he consulted the Oracle of Delphi. By this he was advised not to return to his native land lest he should kill his father and commit incest with his mother. Whereupon Œdipus avoided Corinth and took the road to Thebes, thinking thus to heed the counsel of the oracle.

Now it happened that Laïus, at this time, was on his way to Delphi to ascertain whether his son, whom he had exposed, had perished or not.

And the father and son, total strangers to each other, met in a narrow pass of the road. Neither being willing to make way for the other to go forward, a contest ensued in which Laïus and all his attendants, save one who fled, were slain. Thus the first part of the prediction was fulfilled. Œdipus then proceeded on his journey.

On the top of a hill near Thebes sat a monstrous Sphinx, having a lion's body, a woman's head, and an eagle's wings. She stopped all travellers who came that way, and proposed to them a riddle, with the condition that those who could solve it should be allowed to pass in safety, while those who failed should be devoured.

The riddle was this: "What animal is that which goes on four feet in the morning, on two at noon, and on three at evening?"

Thus far all who tried it had failed to solve it. At length king Creon, his son having fallen a victim to the monster, issued a proclamation offering the throne to which he had succeeded on the death of his brother Laïus, and the hand of Queen Jocasta to whoever should solve the riddle of the Sphinx.

Notwithstanding the alarming reports of so many fatal failures, Œdipus undaunted came forward and answered the Sphinx that it was Man, who creeps in infancy, walks in manhood, and helps himself in old age with a cane as a third foot.

Thereupon the Sphinx, mortified at the solution of her enigma, flung herself down from the rock and perished.

Then Œdipus married Jocasta, little knowing that she was his mother and that he was thereby accomplishing the remainder of the oracle. Four children were the fruit of the incestuous marriage.

Years afterwards, Thebes was afflicted with famine and pestilence; and the oracle being consulted, the double crime of Œdipus was discovered.

Jocasta, crazed by the discovery, hung herself; and her wretched son and husband seized the golden clasps from her garment, and in his grief and despair tore out his eyes, and went forth an exile banished by his sons, but accompanied by his two daughters who faithfully adhered to him till he ended his miserable life in the grove of the Furies.

Then the curse returns and pursues the sons Eteocles and Polynices for banishing their poor, blind father. They agreed to share the kingdom and reign alternately each a year. Eteocles first ascended the throne, and at the end of the year refused to give up the kingdom to his brother according to agreement. A war was the result of such a shameless violation of contract. Polynices repaired to Argos, and obtained the aid of King Adrastus to re-instate him in his rights. Five other heroes joined the expedition, thus forming the confederacy known under the name of the "Seven against Thebes." All the chiefs, with the exception of Adrastus, fell before Thebes; whilst the brothers Polynices and Eteocles were slain in single combat by each other's hands.

Ten years later the sons of the allied leaders took up arms against Thebes to avenge their fathers' fate, hence called the war of the Epigoni or the Descendants. They were successful. Thebes was taken and razed to the ground.

This period of legendary history—so full of human crime, of the vague and misleading oracles of the gods,

and of the swift and inevitable march of fate to overtake and punish the guilty—became a favorite theme of the tragic poets of Athens. And it is safe to say that this subject will never be devoid of interest to classical students.

One of the Greek tragedies founded upon this period, the “Œdipus Tyrannus” of Sophocles, was recently represented on the stage at Harvard University. The different characters were so well studied and produced, the acting, the music, the costumes, the scenery were all so perfect, that the spectators witnessed the play with the greatest enjoyment and enthusiasm. It was pronounced a grand success by all who saw it.

**The Siege of Troy** was the greatest event of the heroic age. According to the legendary account, Jupiter caused the war in order to reduce the inhabitants, because he saw that the earth was becoming too populous. By his direction, the goddess Discord flung a golden apple among the guests at a marriage banquet, with the inscription upon it “For the fairest.” Juno, Venus and Minerva each claiming it, and Jupiter not being willing to decide so delicate a matter himself, he sent the goddesses to the shepherd Paris, the son of Priam, to have him make the decision.

Accordingly they appeared before the appointed judge, and each endeavored to bias his decision in her own favor. Minerva promised him success and glory

in war; Juno, power and riches; while Venus pledged him the most beautiful of women for his wife.

Paris awarded the golden prize to Venus, and thereby incurred the enmity of the other two divinities. Thereupon he proceeded to Sparta to visit Menelaus, whose wife was regarded as the most beautiful woman then living.

She had been sought as a bride by a host of admirers; and before she gave her hand to any, they all agreed to defend her from all injury, and avenge her cause in case of necessity. She consented to marry Menelaus, king of Sparta. And they were living together in peace and happiness when Paris became their guest.

During the temporary absence of her husband, Paris persuaded Helen to elope with him, and the guilty pair embarked and sailed away to Troy, whence arose the famous Trojan war.

When Menelaus returned and learned that his wife had been abducted, he at once called upon his brother chieftains of Greece to redeem their pledge and aid him in the recovery of his stolen wife.

Most of the princes readily responded, and joined the expedition. But Ulysses, who was very happy in his home and family, had no inclination to join in such a troublesome affair. He therefore hung back, and pretended to be insane by yoking an ox and an ass to the plow and beginning to sow the field with salt. The messenger, to try him, placed his infant son before the plow; whereupon the father turned the plow aside,

showing plainly that he understood what he was about, and after that he had no excuse to break his promise.

Being now himself enlisted in the cause, he endeavored to bring in all the rest of the chiefs to join in the undertaking. When Achilles heard of the project, he fled to the court of King Lycomedes, and there concealed himself in the dress of a maiden among the king's daughters. Ulysses, being informed of his flight, went to the palace in the disguise of a merchant with female ornaments and arms to sell. While the young ladies examined the ornaments, Achilles handled the weapons and thus betrayed himself to the crafty Ulysses, who succeeded in persuading him to join his countrymen in the war.

Among the Grecian leaders were also the sage Nestor, the brave Diomede, the giant Ajax, and King Agamemnon, who, being the brother of the injured Menelaus, was chosen Commander-in-chief. After two years preparation the army embarked in a vast fleet and sailed for the coast of Troy.

The principal leaders on the side of the Trojans were Hector, son of King Priam, and Æneas; and they and their comrades were such brave and valiant warriors that it was only after a contest of ten years that the city was taken and destroyed.

And even then it was accomplished by a stratagem on the part of the Greeks. They constructed an immense wooden horse and filled it with armed men. The remaining Greeks then burned their tents and sailed

away to the island of Tenedos and hid themselves on shore to watch the result of their stratagem.

The Trojans imagined that their enemies had abandoned the siege and gone home, and in consequence were much relieved from long distress. They threw open the gates and issued forth in crowds to visit and view the Grecian camp and the deserted shore.

They gaze with wonder at the wooden horse whose stupendous bulk rises before them like a mountain. Some propose to drag it within the walls of the city ; while others more wisely urge either to cast it into the sea, or to burn it to ashes where it stands, or at least to lay it open and explore its hidden recesses.

Laocoön, a son of Priam and priest of Apollo, hastens down from the citadel and warns the people to put no faith in the horse for he is sure that some treacherous design lurks beneath it. "I fear the Greeks" said he, "even when they offer gifts." And thereupon he hurled his javelin against the sides of the monster causing the hollow cavern to ring and to send forth a groan.

Meanwhile some shepherds bring to the king a young Greek captive named Sinon. The Trojans gather round from every quarter all eager to see their helpless foe to hear what he would say and to vie with one another in heaping insults upon him.

As he stood amid the gazing throng disturbed and unarmed, and cast his eyes around, "Alas!" he said, "what land, what seas can now receive me? or what further trouble remains for poor me? for whom there is no

shelter among the Greeks and with whose blood the incensed Trojans too, do now demand satisfaction."

With these words having gained the attention and sympathy of his hearers he then proceeded more boldly to detail the false story of his sufferings. He pretended that he had been the object of unjust suspicion ; that by his bold words in defence of truth and justice he had incurred the bitter hatred of the crafty Ulysses who henceforth persecuted him with new accusations and sought his ruin by spreading ambiguous surmises and making base insinuations about him among the common people ; that the oracle of Apollo had declared that in order to appease the anger of the gods and secure a safe return of the Greeks to their native land it would be necessary to offer up a human sacrifice ; and that he had been destined by the Fates as the victim for the altar. By good fortune he had escaped, and lay concealed till his countrymen had embarked and gone ; and now he begged the Trojans to have pity upon the poor wretch who had no hope of ever again being blessed with the sight of his ancient country and of his sweet children and of his much beloved sire, whom, though innocent perhaps, his foes would put to death in revenge for his escape.

The Trojans, unused to fraud, were moved to compassion at the recital of such grievous afflictions, and by the sight of the forlorn soul who complained that he had suffered such unworthy treatment. Priam ordered his bonds to be loosed, addressed him as a friend, and bade

him disclose the true reason why the horse had been built? who contrived it, and with what intention? Was it designed to answer some religious purpose, or to be an engine of war, or what was the object of its construction?

Then Sinon, calling the gods to witness, affirmed that the horse had been reared to take the place of the Palladium, a stolen statue of Minerva, on the preservation of which depended the safety of Troy. He stated that its size had been made so enormous and its height so great that it might not be admitted into the gates or dragged into the city to afford protection to the inhabitants under their ancient religion.

He warned them that if they should lay violent hands on this sacred image to injure or destroy it, then quick and signal ruin would overwhelm their kingdom. But that if, drawn in by their hands, it should mount into the city, then Asia would advance with a formidable war to the very walls of Pelops, and the Greeks would be overwhelmed with disaster.

By such treachery and artifice false Sinon insnared the Trojans, and with much guile and many tears constrained them to believe his tale. And just at this time a frightful scene is presented which seems to confirm the words of the artful Greek.

Two hideous serpents glide up from the shore and seize and crush to death Laocoön and his two sons. The Trojans are paralyzed with fright at the shocking sight; and when they recover, they find that the serpents have

taken refuge in the Temple of Minerva, and at once they conclude that Laocoon had deservedly suffered for his crime in having hurled his profane spear against the sacred image.

They all with one accord now decide to convey the statue to its proper seat within the city. And to this end they implore the aid of the goddess. Some hasten to make a breach in the walls, while others apply wheels under the feet and attach ropes to the neck of the fatal machine. "Boys and unmarried virgins accompany it with sacred hymns, and are glad to touch the rope with their hands;" while the men, with strong arms and frantic zeal, urge on and plant the baneful monster in the very heart of the citadel. Heedless of approaching doom, they even go so far in their rejoicing as to adorn the temples of the gods throughout the city with festive boughs.

Meanwhile the heavens change. Black night over-spreads the sky; and a deep sleep overtakes and falls upon the weary Trojans.

And now in swift ships the Grecian host make haste to return from Tenedos; and false Sinon steals forth under cover of the darkness and opens the horse to the Greeks imprisoned in its caverns. Ulysses, Menelaus and their companions come forth and assault the city buried in sleep and wine. They beat down the sentinels and open the gates to their returning friends.

Alas! who can describe the havoc of that awful night? Who in pity can weep bitter tears equal to the dire disaster which then fell upon that ancient city?

All the gods deserted their shrines and abandoned their altars to the enemy. Men seemed changed to wild beasts. They lost all terror of death and fought like hungry wolves. The bodies of the slain covered the streets, filled the houses and blocked the sacred thresholds of the temples. To render the destruction complete the Greeks set fire to the city and the beautiful palaces, the splendid temples and all the wealth and art and luxury of that ancient capital perished in the flames.

Such is only a brief and imperfect sketch of one of the most famous events of antiquity. The student will find a much fuller account of it in the great epic poems of Homer and Virgil; and in reading it, he can hardly fail to be impressed with the fact that we too, as well as the ancients, are surrounded and controlled by the infinite power of the immortal God.

The supreme Lord of lords exalts the humble and casts down the proud. Men build great cities; and when, in their race for riches, fame, and power, they forget God and, like Nebuchadnezzar, boast of what they have done by the might of their power and for the honor of their majesty, then God casts them down and destroys their great Babylon, and none can stay his almighty hand.

In the fall of Troy, *Æneas* is inclined to lay all the blame on the beautiful Helen, till Venus, his divine mother, opens his eyes to behold the true facts of the case.

Not Helen, "but the gods, the unrelenting gods, overthrow this powerful realm and level the towering tops of Troy with the ground."

"Here where you see scattered ruins, and stones torn from stones, and smoke in waves ascending with winged dust, Neptune shakes the walls and foundations loosened by his mighty trident, and overturns the whole city from its basis. Here Juno, extremely fierce, is posted in the front to guard the Scaean gate, and, girt with the sword, with furious summons calls from the ships her social band. Behold! Tritonian Pallas hath now sat down on a lofty tower resplendent with a cloud and with the terrible Gorgon. The Father himself gives courage and successful strength to the Greeks; himself incites the gods against the Trojan arms."

In this passage and many others, the poet represents the heathen deities contending with mortals around the walls of Troy.

One of the finest groups of statuary on exhibition is that of Laocoön and his sons in the embrace of the serpents. The original is in the Vatican at Rome, but very good casts and copies of it may be seen in the museums of Boston, Amherst, and elsewhere in our country.

Helen, who, if we regard the war from a human standpoint, was the cause of so much slaughter, rejoined her first husband, Menelaus, after the downfall of the city, and they were among the first to leave the hostile shores for their native land.

Within the last decade, the German traveller Schliemann has made extensive excavations and many important and interesting discoveries on what was probably the site of this ancient city. Among other achievements, he claims to have laid bare the walls of Neptune and Apollo, Priam's palace and the Scæan gate.

## CHAPTER XII.

“A wit’s a feather, and a chief a rod,  
An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”—POPE.

[GREECE CONTINUED.]

### Brief Sketches of Noted Men.

**T**HE SEVEN SAGES.—Under this name, in the sixth century before Christ, certain men became famous. Their names are variously given; but those most generally admitted to the honor are Bias, Chilo, Cleobulus, Periander, Pittacus, Solon, and Thales. These men were the authors of many mottoes and short pithy sayings which exercised great influence upon the people of their time. In later days some specimens of their wisdom were used as inscriptions to adorn the Delphian temple; such as:

“Know thyself.”

“Know thy opportunity.”

“Nothing too much.”

“Suretyship is the precursor of ruin.”

**Bias**, an Ionian, showed his wisdom by declaring that a man should temper his love for his friends by the reflection that they might some day become his enemies, and moderate his hatred of his enemies by the reflection that they might some day become his friends; that “a

man should be slow in making up his mind, but swift in executing his decisions."

He thought "the most unfortunate of all men to be the man who knows not how to bear misfortune."

And once when he overheard some notoriously wicked sailors offering up their prayers for safety when they were likely to be drowned or wrecked in a violent storm, he advised them rather "to be silent, lest the gods should discover that they were at sea."

**Chilo**, a Spartan, believed the three most difficult things in a man's life were: "To keep a secret, to forgive injuries, and to make a profitable use of leisure time."

He engaged in public affairs, and became one of the chief officers of his native city. He travelled much abroad, and probably visited the capital of Crœsus and conversed with the fabulist *Æsop*.

His death at an advanced age was caused by excessive joy over the success of one of his sons in winning a prize at the Olympic games. He died while embracing the victor.

**Cleobulus**, a despot of Lindus, in the island of Rhodes, claimed descent from Hercules, and was remarkable both for his strength and for his beauty of person.

His favorite saying was, "Moderation is best."

He also taught that "it was folly in a husband either to fondle or reprove his wife in company"; and that "a

man should never leave his dwelling without considering well what he was about to do, or re-enter it without reflecting on what he had done."

**Periander**, a despot of Corinth, ruled with oppression and cruelty. Early in his reign he is said to have sent a messenger to the neighboring despot of Miletus to inquire how he could best maintain his power.

And his friend, without giving an answer in writing, led the messenger through a field of standing corn, and as they went, kept asking the object of his mission, and at the same time took pains to cut off all the highest heads of corn that he could see. After passing through the field he dismissed the servant, bidding him to tell his master all that had occurred during the interview.

Periander rightly interpreted the action, and proceeded to put to death the most powerful nobles of the state.

Whether true or not, the anecdote serves to indicate the common opinion that he ruled his people with a rod of iron; and that, although classed among wise men, he was foolish enough to follow bad advice in adopting a bloody policy, though it may have been the surest way of retaining his throne.

He was a warm patron of art and literature, and welcomed to his court the poet and the philosopher. But he would have been a much happier and better man if his wisdom had taught him how to govern his temper. In a fit of anger he is said to have killed his wife, and

thus added another foul and ineffaceable blot to his already blackened character.

**Pittacus**, a wise and virtuous ruler of Mytilene, is rightly entitled to a seat of honor among the so-called sages of Greece. In a war with the Athenians, he was challenged to single combat by their commander, a man of prodigious size and strength. Strabo writes that on this occasion "Pittacus came into the field armed with a casting-net, a trident, and a dagger." Watching his opportunity, he threw the net over the head of his antagonist, and by this means gained an easy victory.

From this stratagem, the Roman gladiators called *Retiarii* borrowed their mode of fighting.

In order to suppress drunkenness, Pittacus passed a law to inflict a double punishment upon offenders for any crimes committed in a state of intoxication.

The following precepts and maxims are some of those which are attributed to him.

"The greatest blessing which a man can enjoy is the power of doing good."

"The wisest man is he who foresees the approach of misfortune; the bravest man, he who knows how to bear it."

"Victory should never be stained by blood."

"Pardon is often a more effectual check on crime than punishment."

"Power discovers the man."

"Never talk of your schemes before they are executed,

lest, if you fail to accomplish them, you be exposed to the double mortification of disappointment and ridicule."

"Whatever you do, do it well."

And his amiable disposition and his consideration for the rights and feelings of others led this sage to give the negative of Christ's golden rule:

"Do not that to your neighbor which you would take ill from him."

**Solon**, the Athenian Law-giver. For centuries before the time of Solon, Athens had suffered from anarchy and misrule. The form of government had been repeatedly changed. Monarchy had long been abolished, and after some confusion one of the nobles had been elected for life to the office of archon or ruler, with supreme power. Then the term of office had been reduced to ten years and subsequently for the purpose of conferring the honor upon a greater number of the nobility, the Athenians adopted the expedient of annually electing nine archons, who were to manage the affairs of religion, direct all military movements, enact laws, administer justice, and generally superintend the government.

The nobles excluded the common people from any share in the government. They claimed the sole right of presiding in the courts and pronouncing judgment, because they alone were acquainted with the traditionary and unrecorded statutes; and in this way partiality was often shown, and much injustice done through arbitrary decisions. This led the common citizens to insist upon

the framing of written laws. The nobles for a long time refused to yield to the popular will, but at length when they saw that further resistance was impossible, they conceived a new plan of oppressing the commons. They commissioned one of their number, Draco, surnamed the Cruel, to frame a code of laws. These proved to be so severe that they were said to have been written in blood.

Death was the penalty for all offences; "for," said Draco, "the smallest crime deserves death, and I can find no heavier punishment for the greatest." A desperate struggle ensued between the haughty nobles and the discontented people. Party spirit raged with such virulence that the state was reduced to the verge of ruin.

At this crisis, Solon, a warm friend of the people, came forward and proved himself to be not only a patriot but the father and savior of his country. He instituted a new and republican form of government for the state, vesting the principal authorities in the assemblies of the people. These assemblies were clothed with the power to enact, appoint judges and state officers, and choose the council of the four hundred. To the nobility he reserved the exclusive right to fill the office of archon and to preside in the high court of the Areopagus. At the same time, Solon greatly relieved the poorer citizens by freeing them from a portion of their crushing debts and restoring them to the free enjoyment of their mortgaged estates.

After completing these measures, Solon exacted a pledge from the Athenians that they would make no

changes in the laws for ten years. He then set forth on a long journey to visit Asia and Egypt, perhaps partly with a design to avoid by his absence any petitions to alter the framework of government which he had established.

At Sardis, the capital of Lydia, he was hospitably entertained by King Croesus, whose enormous wealth has made his name proverbial. After showing his treasures and displaying his glory, Croesus asked his visitor whom he thought to be the happiest of men, supposing, of course, that Solon would name Croesus.

The philosopher, however, mentioned a few persons who, after leading lives distinguished for patriotism and filial devotion, had met with a peaceful and becoming death.

“And what do you think of me ?” asked Croesus.

“Ah!” replied Solon, “call no man happy till he is dead.”

Curtius, in his history of Greece, pays the following high tribute to this sage Athenian law-giver: “An untiring love of knowledge filled Solon from his earliest youth up to the end of his life; for even when at the point of death, he is said to have raised his weary head to take part in the conversations of his friends. This love of knowledge, as well as his domestic circumstances, early caused him to quit the narrow circle of home, and to explore the world. In the midst of his restless life of travel, all his thoughts and wishes remained devoted to his home. Whatever met his eye he looked upon with reference to Attic interests.”

**Thales**, of Miletus, is noted as being the founder of the Ionic school of philosophy. He taught that the primary principle or element, from which all things in the world are formed, is water. He probably meant muddy or impure water, the same thing that other philosophers called *Chaos*.

Thales traveled much in search of knowledge, and spent some time in Egypt, Crete and Phœnicia. He showed the Egyptians to their astonishment how to measure the height of their pyramids. It is evident that Thales possessed a love for mathematics, since he invented several propositions in geometry and was sufficiently acquainted with celestial movements to predict an eclipse. He divided the heavens into five zones, discovered the equinoctial and solstitial points, and calculated the length of the year to be 365 days.

When he saw the action of the loadstone, he declared that all things were full of spirits or "demons."

What would he have thought had he been permitted to behold the wonders of modern science and invention? How amazed he would have been at the mighty motive power of steam, at the mysterious action of the telegraph and the telephone, at the startling revelations of the telescope and the microscope! How blinded he would have been by Edison's electric light, and more firmly convinced than ever before that all things are full of spirits.

After the death of Thales, the Ionic school was continued by teachers who variously modified the theory of

the founder. One believed that *air* was the primary form of all matter ; another held that *fire* or *heat* was the original source of everything ; and another conceived a supreme *mind* or *intelligence* to have brought form and order out of the original chaos.

The second school of Greek philosophy was called the Eleatic, from its birth-place, Elea, a Greek colony on the southwestern coast of Italy.

**Xenophanes** founded this school, and taught his followers to believe the whole of nature to be God. He supported himself for some time at the court of King Hiero by reciting poetry which he had written to denounce and ridicule the descriptions of the gods given by Homer and Hesiod.

His idea was "that God is one incorporeal, eternal being, and, like the universe, spherical in form ; that He is of the same nature with the universe, comprehending all things within himself ; is intelligent and pervades all things, but bears no resemblance to human nature, either in body or mind."

**Pythagoras** founded the third school of Grecian philosophy, at which a great number of pupils were educated. The school was at Crotona, a town on the south coast of Italy. Many incredible stories are related about Pythagoras. Fact and fiction are so closely mingled in the accounts of his life and work that have come down to us, that it is safest to receive all that is said of him

with considerable allowance. Pythagoras first bore the title of philosopher or lover of wisdom.

“In human life,” said he, “amid the various characters of men, there is a select number who, despising all other pursuits, assiduously apply themselves to the study of nature and the search after wisdom; these are the persons whom I call philosophers.”

He resorted to many an artifice which has been repeated in all ages of the world to excite the curiosity and veneration of credulous people. For this purpose he was careful to preserve a grave and commanding aspect, and never to express in his countenance any emotion as grief, joy or anger.

When he appeared in public he wore a long white robe, a flowing beard, and a golden crown; and thus with his ever stately and dignified bearing, he palmed himself off upon the thoughtless multitude as a being of a superior order.

He believed in transmigration of souls, and claimed to have a distinct remembrance of many states and conditions of life through which his soul had passed.

In astronomy, many of his views were undoubtedly correct; but as he advanced no proof, they soon were mostly abandoned and forgotten. According to his theory, the sun is the centre of the solar system, and the planets revolve in circular orbits. The earth makes a daily revolution on its axis and a yearly journey around the sun. Venus appears as both morning and evening

star. He fancied that the planets were inhabited, and even tried to calculate the size of animals in the moon.

Music seemed to be essential to his happiness. The hymns of Homer and Hesiod were favorites which he often sang to promote the tranquility of his mind.

The musical chords are said to have been his discovery. One day while passing by a smith's forge where several workmen were successively striking an anvil with their hammers, he noticed that the sounds of their strokes were harmonious. Upon going into the shop, he perceived that the diversity of sounds was produced by the difference in weight of the hammers. Thereupon he attached corresponding weights to suspended strings and found upon striking the strings that they rendered the same musical chords which the hammers ringing on the anvil had yielded. From this experiment he learned how to make a musical scale and stringed instruments.

He asserted that the distances between the planets are proportional to the intervals in the musical scale, and that on this account the planets move in perfect harmony and make the "music of the spheres." The immortal gods listen with delight to the celestial concert, and the soul of Pythagoras was permitted to hear it; but the ears of ordinary mortals are too gross for such divine melody.

The philosopher was also fond of mathematics, and discovered many propositions in geometry. *In a right-angled triangle the square described on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares described on the other*

*two sides*, is perhaps his greatest triumph in this science. Plutarch says that upon the invention of this truth, Pythagoras offered an ox, others, a hecatomb, to the gods.

The examinations for entrance to the school were unique and curious. Pythagoras closely scanned the features of the candidate and noted his external appearance; inquired how he behaved towards his parents and friends; observed his manner of laughing, conversing, and keeping silence; watched to see what were his habits and passions, and who were his companions; and noticed how he passed his leisure time. From such observations as these he judged whether the applicant was capable of becoming a true philosopher. If admitted, the student was subjected to a long course of the most rigorous discipline.

During the probationary period, the students were prohibited from seeing their master, or hearing his lectures except from behind a curtain. Strict silence was enjoined upon them. They were no more allowed to contradict or talk back than are their modern brothers when receiving curtain-lectures. They had no proof for many assertions, and could only rest upon the authority of their master. Hence they were wont to silence one another's doubts by an *Ipse dixit*, "He said so."

"The teacher said it, and therefore it must be true."

When we read what the teacher said, we no longer wonder that he cared to hide his face behind a curtain. The following are specimens of his sayings and precepts:

- “Adore the sound of the whispering wind.”
- “Stir not the fire with a sword.”
- “Turn aside from an edged tool.”
- “Pass not over a balance.”
- “Setting out on a journey, turn not back, for the Furies will return with you.”
- “Breed nothing that has crooked talons.”
- “Receive not a swallow into your house.”
- “Look not in a mirror by the light of a candle.”
- “Eat not the heart or brain.”
- “Taste not that which has fallen from the tables.”
- “Break not bread.”
- “Sleep not at noon.”
- “When it thunders, touch the earth.”
- “Pluck not a crown.”
- “Roast not that which has been boiled.”
- “Sail not on the ground.”
- “Plant melons in thy garden, but eat them not.”
- “Abstain from beans.”
- “Above all things, govern your tongue.”
- “Engrave not the image of God in a ring.”
- “Quit not your station without the command of your general.”

The Pythagoreans have always kept secret their interpretation of these teachings, and the reader is left to exercise his ingenuity, and conjecture as best he can their hidden meaning. The main object of Pythagoras was evidently to correct vice and commend virtue.

**Socrates**, the great and good philosopher of Athens, was pronounced by the Delphic Oracle "the wisest of men." This he explained by saying that "he knew that he knew nothing, while other men, he found, did not even know that." Cicero calls him "the father of philosophy." His thoughts, as preserved in the writings of his enthusiastic admirers and disciples are high and noble. He aspired to something better than Grecian mythology and the gross speculations of the sophists.

The most sublime truths dawned upon his mind. He taught the immortality of the soul and man's moral responsibility, and both by precept and example commended to all the steady practice of virtue as being essential to happiness and true religion. He professed to be guided by a secret influence, a spirit or demon. He also taught the forgiveness of injuries and the unity of God.

The home-life of the philosopher seems to have been rough and stormy. His wife Xanthippe was not noted for sweet temper and gentle speech, and she was not pleased to have her husband shirk the responsibility of supporting his family by neglecting the legitimate business of a stone-cutter, and devoting himself to endless and unprofitable talking in the streets and in the public resorts of the city. Indeed, on one occasion when she had lost all patience, she emphasized her scolding by a shower of dish-water.

Whereat the dripping philosopher dryly remarked, "I thought after so much thunder we should have some rain."

Socrates cared little for dress or food. The same homely and scanty clothing satisfied him both in winter and summer. In the severity of a Thracian winter he walked barefoot upon the ice, while others clad in furs could scarcely endure the cold. He declined an invitation to live in luxury at the court of a Macedonian prince, saying, "At Athens meal is two-pence the measure, and water may be had for nothing."

Socrates used a peculiar mode of teaching. He generally aimed to establish the truth by a series of cunningly contrived questions. He took extreme delight in exposing the fallacies of the sophists and in covering them with shame and confusion of face. At first he would put a question which seemed to have no bearing on the point at issue, and then by degrees he would lead them on, causing them to make one admission after another, till they were involved in absurdities, and convicted by their own words. By this course he made many enemies.

At length he was brought to trial and condemned to death on the charge of disbelief in the state religion, the introduction of new deities, and the corruption of the youth. After the verdict had been rendered against him, he probably could have mitigated the severity of the sentence by appealing for mercy to the judge, but he would not do this. He boldly declared that he deserved to be maintained at the public expense as a public benefactor.

After condemnation, Socrates was kept in prison thirty days, which time he spent mainly in religious conversa-

tion with his friends. One of his disciples arranged for his escape by bribing the jailer; but Socrates firmly refused to save his life by a breach of the laws, which he had never violated.

“How sad is it,” said one, “that thou shouldst die innocent!”

“What, would you have me die guilty?” responded Socrates with a smile.

At last, when the summons came, he drank the fatal cup of hemlock, and died with cheerfulness and composure amid sorrowing and weeping friends. And his great soul adorned with the jewels of “temperance and justice and courage and nobility and truth,” returned to God who gave it.

**Plato**, one of the disciples of Socrates, founded the Academic School of Philosophy. It took its name from the fact that it was established in the grove of Academus, a public garden, at Athens. After opening the school, Plato soon became very popular as a teacher. Crowds came to hear his lectures, and it is said that even ladies assumed male attire that they might mingle unnoticed with the hearers and enjoy the eloquence which flowed from the lips of the master. He presented his views in the form of dialogues, in which Socrates is the chief speaker, while other characters are introduced to sustain the minor parts of the conversation.

Plato was fond of mathematics, and invented geometrical analysis. He considered the study of this science

so important that he placed the following sign on his school: "Let no one enter here who is a stranger to geometry."

Ancient critics could find little fault with his style or language. "If Jupiter should speak Greek, it would be Plato's." Many of his doctrines are in harmony with the Christian religion, and his writings so much resemble the Jewish Scriptures that he has been often called the "Attic Moses."

**Aristotle** founded the Peripatetic school of philosophy, so called from his habit of walking up and down in the Lyceum while delivering his lectures. At the age of seventeen, he entered the Academy of Plato, and so diligently did he apply himself to his studies, that his master was wont to say that he needed the bit rather than the spur, and named him the Intellect of the school.

On one occasion, Plato delivered a lecture to this ardent student alone, the rest having failed to attend, remarking as he began that, "so long as he had Aristotle for an audience, he had the better half of Athens." Like all other great men, Aristotle was industrious. He could never bear to be idle, and he grudged the time needed for rest. He used to sleep with a ball in his hand in order that, when it fell to the floor by the relaxing of the muscles, the noise might awaken him, and he could then proceed with his work.

He was chosen by Philip of Macedon as preceptor to his son Alexander, and he endeavored faithfully to dis-

charge the duties of his office till his royal pupil ascended the throne.

Aristotle was the first writer on rhetoric, mental science, natural history, and logic.

**Demosthenes**, the greatest orator of antiquity, was a contemporary of Aristotle, both living in the fourth century before Christ. His success was mainly due to an unconquerable will. No natural advantages, no favor of circumstances, has placed upon his brow a crown of glory for all time. Little did the people of his day imagine that his name was to be written so high upon the roll of fame.

His first appearance as a public speaker was a complete failure. A feeble and stammering voice, faulty pronunciation, short breath, awkward gestures, a habit of shrugging his shoulders and distorting his features, and a crude style of composition, all combined to make him the object of scorn and ridicule.

But by an unflagging perseverance, he triumphed over all these infirmities, and placed himself "at the head of all mighty masters of speech." The characteristics of his oratory are clearness, precision, honesty, purity of purpose, compact reasoning power, and scathing invective. He took a firm stand against the ambitious plans of Philip, and this his grateful fellow-citizens, the Athenians, recognized in the lines which they caused to be inscribed on the brazen statue erected to his memory :

"Had you for Greece been strong as wise you were,  
The Macedonians had not conquered her."

**Alexander the Great**, son of Philip, and pupil of Aristotle, was, as all know, the conqueror of the world. At an early age he devoted himself diligently to study, and he became proficient in all the branches of human knowledge. He was especially fond of Homer's poems, committed them to memory, and endeavored to fashion his character after that of Achilles.

At the same time, the physical education of the young prince was not neglected. His frame was made vigorous by gymnastic exercise. While very young, he gave proof of his manly courage and skill by taming a high-spirited horse, Bucephalus, which had mastered every other rider.

He began to reign at the age of twenty, and in the short space of twelve years he finished his remarkable career, having made himself master of Greece, Egypt, and all Asia from the Hellespont to the Indus.

He died at Babylon, and his body was deposited in a golden coffin, and carried by Ptolemy to Alexandria, and divine honors were paid to him not only in Egypt, but also in other countries.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"The corbells were carved grotesque and grim;  
And the pillars with clustered shafts so trim,  
With base and with capital flourished around,  
Seemed bundles of lances which garlands had bound."—SCOTT.

[GREECE CONCLUDED.]

### A Glance at Greek Art and Artists.

**T**HE architecture, the Greeks achieved a wonderful degree of perfection. They doubtless borrowed many ideas from Egypt, Assyria and Persia, as all the principal elements of Greek art can be traced in the ancient and monumental ruins of these countries. They especially excelled in architecture and sculpture. No modern genius has ever yet been able to surpass their masterpieces.

There are three main styles or orders of Grecian architecture, the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian, chiefly distinguished by the form of the column and its capital.

Of these, the Doric is perhaps the oldest and the simplest, and was, as its name implies, the favorite style of the ancient Dorians. The column is usually found without a base, and its capital devoid of ornament. The famous **Parthenon** at Athens is the finest example of this style. Ferguson says of it in his *History of Architecture*: "In its own class, it is undoubtedly the most beautiful building in the world. It is true that it has

neither the dimensions nor the wondrous expression of power and eternity inherent in Egyptian temples, nor has it the variety and poetry of the Gothic cathedral; but for intellectual beauty, for perfection of proportion, for beauty of detail, and for the exquisite perception of the highest and most recondite principles of art ever applied to architecture, it stands utterly alone and unrivalled, the glory of Greece and the shame of the rest of the world."

It was built of Pentelic marble, on the highest ground of the Acropolis, during the splendid era of Pericles, and at an expense estimated at six thousand talents. There were eight massive fluted pillars at each end, and seventeen on each side. At either end, above the columns, there was a lofty pediment, occupied by about twenty figures of heroic size. The western group represented the contest of Minerva with Neptune for the soil of Athens; while the corresponding one above the eastern front exhibited the birth of the Athenian goddess.

The frieze below the cornice was also filled with figures sculptured in high relief, representing the actions of the goddess in aiding and protecting her favorite heroes.

These sculptures, together with those of the pediments at the two fronts, are the works of Phidias and his scholars, and they afford a striking proof of the perfection to which this beautiful art was carried in ancient times.

The temple contained the colossal statue of Minerva, which was also the work of Phidias. It was composed of ivory and gold, and for this reason it was of almost

incalculable value. Indeed one writer states that forty-four talents of gold, equal in value to about \$465,000, were used in adorning the statue, but, whatever the amount, it was soon stripped off and carried away as plunder by some of the many robbers with whom the country has been infested from immemorial time.

The magnificent temple became in turn a Christian church and a Mohammedan mosque, and stood entire till the year 1687, when during a siege by the Venetians it was partly destroyed. The Turks had stored some powder in it, and this was unfortunately exploded by one of the enemy's bombs, whereby the roof was completely demolished and the whole building nearly reduced to ruins.

In the early part of the present century, the earl of Elgin, by permission of the Porte, brought many of the sculptures from this temple to England.

The government purchased his collection for £35,000, or \$175,000, a little more than two-thirds the cost of excavation and transportation, and placed it on exhibition in the British Museum. These sculptures are known as the Elgin Marbles.

The lovers of the fine arts in America possess many copies in the form of casts of these original masterpieces.

This temple with its treasures of art offers to all the world undeniable evidence of the genius of the Greeks. "The appearance of the Parthenon," says Lamartine, "testifies more loudly than history itself to the greatness of this people. Pericles will never die! What a civili-

zation was that which found a great man to decree, an architect to conceive, a sculptor to adorn, statuaries to execute, workmen to carve, and a people to pay for and maintain such an edifice!"

*The Ionic style of architecture* is distinguished by simple gracefulness and by much richer ornamentation than the Doric. The column is slender, and rests upon a base, while the capital is made beautiful with spiral volutes.

The great **temple of Diana** at Ephesus was the best example of this order. A recent writer\* gives the following description of this wonderful structure: "One building at Ephesus surpassed all the rest in magnificence and in fame. This was the temple of Artemis, or Diana, which glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and was reckoned by the ancients as one of the wonders of the world. The sun, it was said, saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. Its honor dated from remote antiquity. Leaving out of consideration the earliest temple, which was contemporaneous with the Athenian colony under Androclus, or even yet more ancient, we find the great edifice, which was anterior to the Macedonian period, begun and continued in the midst of the attention and admiration both of Greeks and Asiatics. The foundations were carefully laid, with immense sub-structures in the marshy ground. Architects of the highest distinction were

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\*Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*.

employed. The quarries of Mount Prion supplied the marble. All the Greek cities of Asia contributed to the structure, and Croesus, the king of Lydia, himself lent his aid. The work thus begun before the Persian war was slowly continued even through the Peloponnesian war, and its dedication was celebrated by a poet contemporary with Euripides. But the building which had been thus rising through the space of many years, was not destined to remain long in the beauty of its perfection. The fanatic Herostratus set fire to it on the same night in which Alexander was born. This is one of the coincidences of history on which the ancient world was fond of dwelling, and it enables us with more distinctness to pursue the annals of "Diana of the Ephesians." The temple was rebuilt with new and more sumptuous magnificence. The ladies of Ephesus contributed their jewelry to the expense of the restoration. The national pride in the sanctuary was so great that when Alexander offered the spoils of his Eastern campaign if he might inscribe his name on the building, the honor was declined. The Ephesians never ceased to embellish the shrine of their goddess, continually adding new decorations and subsidiary buildings, with statues and pictures by the most famous artists. This was the temple that kindled the enthusiasm of Paul's opponents (Acts xix.), and was still the rallying point of heathenism in the days of John and Polycarp. In the second century we read that it was united to the city by a long colonnade. But soon after it was plundered and laid waste by the Goths, who

came from beyond the Danube in the reign of Gallienus. It sunk entirely into decay in the age when Christianity was overspreading the empire, and its remains are to be sought for in mediæval buildings, in the columns of green jasper which support the dome of Sophia, or even in the naves of Italian cathedrals."

Thus the temple of Diana saw all the changes of Asia Minor from Crœsus to Constantine. Though nothing now remains on the spot to show us what or even where it was, there is enough in its written memorials to give us some notions of its appearance and splendor.

The reader will bear in mind the characteristic style which was assumed by Greek architecture, and which has suggested many of the images of the New Testament. It was quite different from the lofty and ascending forms of those buildings which have since arisen in all parts of Christian Europe, and essentially consisted in horizontal entablatures resting on vertical columns.

In another respect, also, the temples of the ancients may be contrasted with our churches and cathedrals. They were not roofed over for the reception of a large company of worshippers, but were in fact colonnades erected as subsidiary decorations around the cell which contained the idol, and were through a great part of their space open to the sky.

The colonnades of the Ephesian Diana really constituted an epoch in the history of art, for in them was first matured that graceful Ionic style, the feminine beauty of which was more suited to the genius of the

Asiatic Greek than the sterner and plainer Doric in which the Parthenon and Propylaea were built.

The scale on which the temple was erected was magnificently extensive. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet in length, and two hundred and twenty in breadth, and the columns were sixty feet high.

The number of columns was one hundred and twenty-seven, each of them the gift of a king; and thirty-six of them were enriched with ornament and color.

The folding doors were of cypress-wood, the part which was not open to the sky was roofed over with cedar, and the stair-case was formed of the wood of one single vine from the island of Cyprus.

The value and fame of the temple were enhanced by its being the treasury in which a large portion of the wealth of Western Asia was stored up. It is probable that there was no religious building in the world in which was concentrated a greater amount of admiration, enthusiasm and superstition.

*The Corinthian style of architecture* is more elaborate and beautiful than either of the other orders. The form of the capital was suggested to the mind of the celebrated sculptor Callimachus by his seeing a basket covered with a tile and overgrown by the leaves of an acanthus, a kind of thistle or thorn, on which it had accidentally been placed.

A fine example of this order was the **Choragic monument of Lysicrates** at Athens, formerly known as the

Lantern of Demosthenes, which was built in the time of Alexander the Great.

A copy of this occupies the summit of a tower at St. Cloud in France, and deserves mention as one of the rare specimens of the Corinthian style to be found in Greece.

It was one of the many small houses which were used to hold and exhibit the tripods—prizes won by victors in the scenic games—which on festal occasions were employed to adorn one of the thoroughfares of Athens, named in consequence the Street of the Tripods.

**The Madeleine**, or Church of St. Mary Magdalene, in Paris, is a beautiful example of the Corinthian style of architecture.

**Girard College**, in Philadelphia, is another noted example in this style, and is by far the best specimen of Greek architecture in America.

**Socrates**, the noted philosopher, practiced the art of sculpture, as already mentioned, and there was at the entrance to the Athenian Acropolis a group of beautiful Graces, clothed, which was executed by him. The form of these three Graces, who are draped, is preserved and represented in miniature on the reverse of a coin. In the earliest sculptures, both Venus and the Graces were represented clothed.

**Praxiteles**, who flourished about 364 B. C., has been praised as an original inventor and discoverer of a new

style in sculpture. It is said that when he found that the highest eminence in the more masculine features of the art had already been attained by others, and when he perceived also that the taste of his age tended towards the beautiful to the neglect somewhat of the strong and powerful, he resolved to woo assiduously the milder and gentler graces of style.

In this pursuit he succeeded admirably in uniting elegance and refinement with simplicity. He seized the happy “medium between the stern majesty which awes and the beauty which merely seduces; between the external allurements of form and the colder but loftier charm of intellectuality. Over his compositions he has thrown an expression spiritual at once and sensual; a voluptuousness and modesty which touch the most insensible, yet startle not the most retiring.”

When the people of Cos applied to him for a statue of the goddess Venus, he exhibited two, and offered them the choice of a nude or a clothed figure. They chose the latter, while the former was eagerly sought and bought by the Cnidians, and put on exhibition by them in a separate building, and so placed as to give the best possible view. This statue attained so great celebrity that strangers came from all parts of the known world for the sole purpose of seeing it; and a certain king offered to cancel an enormous debt which the Cnidians owed him, if they would only transfer their Venus to him; but as the statue was an important source of revenue, they firmly refused all overtures to part with it.

No satisfactory trace of this celebrated piece of art remains.

Probably the nearest approach to it is the *Venus de Medici*, and this, at best, can only be a feeble imitation of the original.

There is a bronzed Roman coin stamped with a figure which is evidently a reduced copy of the Cnidian *Venus*, as the legend on it, in Greek, "of the Cnidiots," seems clearly to indicate.

Another statue of *Venus* in the Gardens of the Vatican, though inferior in art, more nearly resembles the figure on the coin.

Cupid bending his bow is a fine piece of art-work which the genius of Praxiteles originally conceived and executed, and well illustrates the style of this artist, who did not even hesitate to unveil to the admiring gaze of the world the charms of the goddess herself.

Still another famous work of the same sculptor was the *Lizard-killer*, many copies of which, varying in fidelity and excellence, are to be seen in different galleries.

In painting, Greece had a few great artists, of whom she was justly proud. The coloring of vases and statues seems to have been early practiced. At first, a single color only was used, and afterwards, as art advanced, real life was more closely imitated by the use of various colors.

The Parthenon "presents remains of painting on some members of the cornice; many colored devices remain on the upper part of the walls in the interior;

and the ground of the frieze, containing the reliefs of the Panathenaic procession, was blue." It is apparent from this and other ruins, that color and gilding were sometimes used in architecture; yet the Greek artist, whose special mission was to represent and realize the beautiful, did not regard nor employ paintings as a mere adjunct of architecture, but richly decorated wood with designs drawn from history or mythology.

A writer informs us that "encaustic painting in colors, boiled in wax and oil, was known" at an early date.

A picture of a battle, painted about 700, B. C., is said to have been sold to the King of Lydia for its weight in gold.

But **Polygnotus**, who flourished about 460, B. C., is the earliest Athenian artist who exhibited much talent in his productions.

The temples of Athens were adorned by his hand, and the temple of Delphi was embellished by two paintiugs:

"The Taking of Troy" and

"The Visit of Ulysses to the Under World."

For the latter work the Council presented him a vote of thanks, and decreed that, whenever he travelled, he should be entertained at the public expense.

One of his pictures, preserved at Rome, represented a man on a scaling-ladder, holding a target in his hand, and so evenly balanced that it was impossible to tell whether he was going up or down.

Although he used only four unshaded colors on a

colored ground, yet his works were very highly esteemed “for clear harmonious composition, for delicacy of drawing, for fullness of expression in the figures, and nobleness in the forms.” Indeed, it was remarked of one of his female portraits, that “The whole Trojan War lay in her eyelids.”

And in a contrast which Aristotle draws between him and two other artists, he asserts that the paintings of Polygnotus are more favorable than nature, while those of the second are more unfavorable, and those of the last exact representations.

After the Peloponnesian war **Parrhasius** and **Zeuxis** rose to fame and became the most noted masters of the period. Both of these men were in the end inflated with the most inordinate vanity and self-conceit.

Parrhasius assumed the title of the “Elegant” and also styled himself the “Prince of Painters” and openly declared that he had attained to perfection in the art of painting. He even carried his arrogance so far as to claim descent from Apollo and to dedicate his own portrait in a temple as Mercury in order that he might be worshipped by the multitude.

He courted attention and applause from the people and in this respect he much resembled Pythagoras. Nothing pleased him better than the excited admiration of the crowd. And to this end when he appeared in public he was accustomed to wear a purple robe and a

golden garland, and to carry a cane wound round with tendrils of gold and to have his sandals bound on with golden straps.

The portraits which this artist executed were generally excellent in outline and beautifully finished, though they lacked strength and boldness of conception where these qualities were essential and to be expected. There was something effeminate and voluptuous in his male figures which absorbed the idea of manly character and elastic vigor.

A brother artist in criticising his **Theseus** remarked that he looked as though he had been fed on roses and not on beef.

The story of his contest with Zeuxis has often been told. The latter painted a bunch of grapes so true to nature that the birds came and pecked at them. By this unequivocal testimony to the excellence of his work Zeuxis was greatly delighted and requested his rival to draw back the curtain which he supposed concealed the picture which was to compete with his own, anticipating a sure triumph.

But now he unexpectedly found himself defeated, for what he took to be a curtain proved to be the picture itself, whereupon he frankly owned that he had been beaten since he had only succeeded in deceiving the birds while his competitor by superior skill had entrapped the senses of an experienced artist.

Another similar story is related of Zeuxis, wherein he is said to have "painted a boy with a basket of grapes to

which the birds as before resorted; on which he acknowledged that the boy could not be well painted, since had the similitude been in both cases equal the birds would have been deterred from approaching."

In the latter years of his life Zeuxis gave away his pictures to his friends because he considered that their value was so great that nobody was rich enough to buy them.

When reproached for slowness in finishing his chief productions he replied that he was painting for eternity.

The report that he died of laughing over the likeness of an old woman that he had painted is probably a fiction.

But the palm in painting properly belongs to the artist **Apelles**, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great.

And it is a relief to turn to his character, so unlike those we have been considering, inasmuch as his modesty was only equalled by his genius. His suavity of manners won for him the friendship and patronage of Alexander. Indeed it is said that the monarch would not allow his portrait to be painted by any other artist.

On one occasion Alexander engaged him to paint a likeness of Campaspe, one of his concubines, who was distinguished for her surpassing beauty, and when he saw that the artist was captivated by her unrivalled charms he generously resigned all claims to her and gave her as a present to his friend.

According to Pliny, she served as the prototype for the **Venus Anadyomene**, or Venus rising from the waves, which was universally regarded as the masterpiece of this artist. It has been called “the personification of Female Grace, the wonder of art, the despair of artists, whose outline baffled every attempt at emendation, while imitation shrunk from the purity, the force, the brilliancy, the evanescent gradations of her tints.”

Another famous work of this artist, was a picture of Alexander grasping a thunderbolt, which was sold for twenty talents of gold (about \$211,000), and hung up in the temple of Diana, at Ephesus. A portrait of the war horse, Bucephalus, did not at first satisfy his owner ; but he changed his mind in reference to it when a mare, accidentally passing, began to neigh at the sight of the pictured charger, and the delighted artist thought the animal a better judge of painting than the King of Macedon.

“No day without a line” was the motto of Apelles.

When he finished a piece, he exposed it to public view, and then concealed himself behind it, so as to hear the opinions of spectators. One day a shoemaker, who noticed that a correction had been made in the picture, owing to a previous criticism of his upon a shoe, now began to find fault with the leg also, when the artist suddenly appeared, and indignantly bade him to confine his critical remarks to the slipper. Hence arose the common saying, “Cobbler, stick to your last.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

*Antony.*—O mighty Cæsar ! Dost thou lie so low ?  
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,  
Shrunk to this little measure ?—SHAKESPEARE.

### Rome, and Some of Her Great Men.

N the south of the European continent, the middle peninsula of Italy drops down into the Mediterranean Sea. And any one, by a glance at the map, will notice the singular and amusing fact, that this country is shaped much like a human leg and foot. The mountain range running through it suggests the bones of strength, while the island of Sicily, at the toe, suggests that the person to whom the leg belongs may be playing a game of foot-ball.

At any rate, that strong limb thrust down into the sea and disturbing its waters, and throbbing with volcanic life, is a fitting symbol of Rome, once the proud mistress of the world—Rome, not the intellectual head, but the active leg and foot, ready to march and carry her conquests to the ends of the earth—Rome, not the flitting, baseless fabric of a dream, but the eternal city, ready to stand and withstand the shock of warring centuries, and able, when the clouds of battle are cleared away, still to show to the admiring world the imperishable monuments of her grandeur.

Italy extends from Mont Blanc, on the north, to the tip of the heel, about 700 miles ; and the distance from heel to toe is about 200 miles. The average width of the peninsula is about 100 miles, and the area is not much over 1,000,000 square miles, or double the size of New York and New Jersey combined.

The mountains rise from 4,000 to 15,000 feet in height. The volcano Vesuvius, near Naples, is about 4,000 feet high. That is about the same as the height of the Catskills in New York State.

Italy is a land of beautiful scenery. No language can justly describe her lovely lakes and landscapes, and no artist can catch and reproduce on canvas the splendid and glowing beauty of her proverbially brilliant sunsets.

Horace, with a poet's fondness, rightly calls his native land "the most smiling corner of the world." The mild climate, the fertile plains, the green pastures, the vineyards, rich harvests, fine forests, and orchards of the orange and the olive, and the groves of mulberry, the lofty mountains and wild gorges, all combine to render Italy an attractive country for human habitation.

And the people of this country have taken a leading part in the general history of the world. The three nations which have stood out foremost in the field of human achievements, are the Greeks, the Romans, and the Teutons. The Greeks furnished the seed, the Romans planted it, and for centuries the Teutons have been gathering the harvest. Each nation, in turn, having accomplished its divinely appointed work, has given

place to its successor. Of these, the Romans occupy the central position in time and place. They alone founded a universal Empire in which all earlier history was absorbed, and out of which all later history has grown.

The Roman Empire was formed by gradually bringing under its sway all the countries round about the Mediterranean Sea, alike in Europe, Africa and Asia. And the man who undoubtedly had most to do with founding the Empire was

### Julius Caesar.

He was born in the year 100 B. C. From his earliest boyhood he discovered remarkable talents, and in after years he became the most distinguished person of his age. Müller gives the following condensed account of his character and career: "We are now contemplating that man who, within the short space of fourteen years, subdued Gaul, thickly inhabited by warlike nations; twice conquered Spain; entered Germany and Britain; marched through Italy at the head of a victorious army; destroyed the power of Pompey the Great; reduced Egypt to obedience; saw and defeated Pharnaces; overpowered in Africa the name of Cato and the armies of Juba; fought fifty battles in which 1,192,000 men fell; was the greatest orator in the world next to Cicero; set a pattern to all historians which has never been excelled; wrote learnedly on the science of grammar and augury, and, falling by a premature death, left memorials of his great plans for the extension of the Empire and the legis-

lation of the world. So true it is that it is not time that is wanting to man, but resolution to turn it to the best advantage."

"According to Pliny, he was able to read, write, hear and dictate at one and the same time from four to seven different letters." "Besides being a general, statesman, jurist, orator, and historian, he was also a poet, a mathematician, an astronomer and an architect." He was "equally fitted to excel in everything."

Shakespeare calls him "The foremost man of the world." And being such, he aspired to the highest position and authority among his people. He once remarked while passing through a small Alpine town that he would rather be the first man in that village than the second man in Rome.

He was the idol of his army, and when on the eve of battle no more stirring and impressive words could be spoken to the troops than: "Soldiers, imagine that Cæsar beholds you." He would achieve the greatest victories and announce them to the Roman Senate with modesty and brevity. His famous campaign against Pharnaces he reported in three words: "Veni, vidi, vici," "I came, I saw, I conquered."

In the year 44 B. C. he was assassinated in the Senate-chamber and he fell covered with wounds at the foot of Pompey's Statue. Two of the principal instigators in forming the conspiracy and perpetrating the foul deed were Cassius and Brutus. The motives which prompted Cassius and most of the others to stain their hands with

such a crime seem to have been mainly envy and jealousy of the rising greatness of Cæsar.

Shakespeare draws the following pen-portrait of Cassius, the base, sneaking, plotting, hypocritical scoundrel. Cæsar thus confidentially frees his mind to his friend Antony :

“ Let me have men about me that are fat;  
 Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o’ nights:  
 Yond’ Cassius has a lean and hungry look;  
 He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.  
 Would he were fatter:—But I fear him not:  
 Yet if my name were liable to fear  
 I do not know the man I should avoid  
 So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much;  
 He is a great observer, and he looks  
 Quite through the deeds of men: he loves no plays  
 As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music:  
 Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a sort,  
 As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit  
 That could be moved to smile at any thing.  
 Such men as he be never at heart’s ease,  
 Whiles they behold a man greater than themselves;  
 And therefore are they very dangerous.”

The same poet has the following lines on the character of Brutus, who took his own life after the disastrous battle of Philippi :

“ This was the noblest Roman of them all:  
 All the conspirators, save only he,  
 Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;  
 He, only, in a general honest thought,  
 And common good to all made one of them.  
 His life was gentle; and the elements  
 So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up  
 And say to all the world, *This was a man !* ”

But let us leave Cæsar, who has been styled “ The

greatest man who ever lived in the tide of times," and briefly consider the career of his contemporary,

### Marcus Tullius Cicero.

This most distinguished Roman orator was born in the province of Latium, near Arpinum, six years before the birth of Julius Cæsar. And his tragic death occurred about a year after Cæsar's fall.

Plutarch derives the name of Cicero from *cicer*, a vetch, and says that he was so called because "he had a flat excrescence on the top of his nose in resemblance of a vetch." Pliny makes the more probable suggestion that the name originated in the remarkable success of the first person who bore it, in raising vetches. Be that as it may, the Cicero of whom we are writing could never be persuaded to lay aside or change the name. If it was a shame to have such a name he gloried in his shame, and when he became quæstor in Sicily he consecrated in one of the temples a silver offering, inscribed with his first names **Marcus Tullius** followed by the engraving of a vetch to represent the Cicero. Such are some of the stories, whether false or true, which are told about his name.

When he was old enough to attend school, he was placed under the instruction of the most accomplished and proficient poets, lawyers and orators of the period. And it is said to his praise that "he had both the capacity and inclination to learn all the arts." There was no branch of science which he neglected or despised.

Poetry was a favorite study, and there was one period in his life when he was regarded as the best poet as well as the greatest orator in Rome.

Oratory and arms were the avenues to distinction in his days, and having no desire to lead the life and fight the battles of a soldier, Cicero applied himself to oratory with all diligence and zeal. The speeches of different orators and their styles of delivery were carefully studied. His first efforts in public speaking were defective in lively action and yet by the aid of his teachers he soon gained the palm of eloquence over all his rivals.

Some idea of his personal appearance may be formed from the following description : "Among the crowd who listened to the orators in the Forum as they thundered from the Rostra, stood a tall, thin youth, with outstretched neck and eager eyes, gazing with rapt attention on the speakers and learning from them the art how to sway by the charm of eloquence the fierce democracy of Rome."

—*Forsyth's Life of Cicero.*

At an early age he entered upon his brilliant career of public advancement, and having held in succession the offices of quæstor, ædile, and prætor, he finally reached the goal of political ambition in being elected to the consulship. And in every position which he occupied he always aimed to discharge his duties with integrity and fidelity, by which course he generally gained the good-will of the most worthy people. The dishonest scoundrels of course hated him.

The conspiracy of Catiline happened while Cicero

was Consul, and it was in the exposure and suppression of this incredible league of crime and wickedness that the eloquent orator won his greatest victory and received the title *Father of his Country* in recognition of his services.

Yet he was blamed for the summary punishment, without trial of some of the conspirators, and this action on his part eventually proved his ruin. Shortly afterwards a bill was proposed that "whoever had put to death a Roman citizen uncondemned in due form of trial should be interdicted from fire and water;" and as this bill was a blow aimed directly at Cicero he retired into exile in the deepest despondency and grief.

Through the untiring efforts of friends he was recalled after several months of banishment. He returned to Rome in time to witness the struggle for supremacy between Cæsar and Pompey. After some mental vacillation he took sides with the latter. When Pompey and the senatorial party were finally crushed in the campaign of Pharsalia, Cicero submitted with seeming good-will to the dictatorship of Cæsar: but his letters clearly show that he was disappointed and they also betray a weak and peevish disposition.

This, however, was the period of his greatest literary activity. He makes books, as many an author since has done, to keep his mind from dwelling on the miseries of his political failure and defeat.

Some think that Cicero saw the murder of Cæsar, at any rate he applauded his assassination and joined the con-

spirators. He denounced Antony with exceeding bitterness and violence in the famous orations called after those of Demosthenes the **Philippics**—an act for which he soon paid the forfeit of his life.

When Antony rose to power he had Cicero's name placed on the proscribed list ; and soon afterwards a band of soldiers found and dispatched him near his Formian Villa. They cut off his hands and head and carried them to Antony, who caused them to be nailed to the Rostra in mockery of the triumphs of their owner's eloquence. Thus perished the great orator Cicero. Without question he possessed many shining traits of character, such as virtue and purity and temperance. As a friend he was kind and obliging, as a father he was gentle, sympathizing and affectionate, and as a citizen he was honest and patriotic. That he had faults, no one can justly deny. His vanity was excessive. It crops out everywhere in his orations. He thought he well deserved divine honor. He coveted popular applause. It possessed a charm for him beyond all else. Consequently when adversity overtook him he was utterly forlorn and wretched.

Cicero was a voluminous writer, his works embracing nearly every branch of literature. More than eight hundred letters from his pen are extant, and about fifty orations remain entire, besides numerous treatises and essays on a great variety of subjects.

And in all these writings we behold and admire consummate grace and beauty of diction. He never lacks words by which to express his thought. They seem to

pour forth without effort from an inexhaustible fountain. And whatever else can be said about Cicero, he can never deservedly be called dull and stupid. He was witty and imaginative. Indeed, according to Niebuhr, "The predominant and most brilliant faculty of his mind was his wit."

**Augustus Cæsar**, a great-nephew whom Julius Cæsar had adopted as his son, was the first Roman Emperor. He received the title of Augustus in the year 27 B. C., which marked the dignity of his rank and person, and by degrees he gained supreme control of civil and religious matters, and exercised his power with moderation. He was also called "The Father of his Country." The title of Dictator had been rendered odious by Sylla and Cæsar, and therefore Augustus wisely and firmly declined to assume it.

During his reign many wars were successfully prosecuted in different parts of the Empire. A small district of Spain, and the lands between the Alps and the Danube were added to his dominion. And the Parthians were obliged to give up Armenia and restore the eagles taken from Crassus and Antony.

At length peace was established throughout the Empire, and the temple of Janus was closed for the third time since the foundation of Rome. The universal repose lasted nearly twenty years, and then it was broken by the defeat of Varus in a battle with the Germans beyond the Rhine. The German hero Arminius, with his army,

destroyed three Roman legions, and thus stopped all fear of Germany becoming a Roman province. Augustus was much depressed by the report of this misfortune. He mourned over the loss of his men with deepest sorrow, letting his beard and hair grow long, and often crying out, "Oh, Varus, give me back my legions!"

During the term of peace above referred to, Augustus faithfully devoted himself to improving his empire. To this end he issued decrees to reform abuses in the government, to elevate and educate the people, to subject the army to discipline, to promote marriage, to suppress luxury, and, in fine, to subserve all the best interests of the state. He also travelled extensively in neighboring countries, to gather knowledge for the benefit of his subjects. And they in turn erected altars to him, and by a decree of the Senate, named the month of August after him, as July had been called after his predecessor.

In height, Augustus was below the medium, but well proportioned. And in reference to his appearance, it is said that he had light brown hair, inclined to curl, and bright and lively eyes, while the general expression of his countenance indicated a calm and gentle disposition.

Yet at times there must have been something awe-inspiring or terrifying in his presence. On one occasion he encouraged a trembling petitioner by saying, "Friend, you appear as if you were approaching an elephant rather than a man. Be bolder."

He was a generous patron of learning, and scholars

were welcomed and honored at his court, though his own literary attainments were meagre. It was his prudent habit to carefully write out his speeches, and then, having read them to his wife for her advice and criticism, he would commit them to memory before he delivered them to the public.

The reign of Augustus was the golden age of literature. In his time flourished the poets Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, the historian Livy, and many other writers. And this was also the period when Rome was enriched and adorned with many splendid buildings. It is truly said of Augustus that "he found Rome of brick and left it of marble."

But the chief glory and distinction of his age was little known or thought of in the brilliant circles of his capital. Towards the end of his reign, Christ was born at Bethlehem, in Judea. And in His person a greater one than Augustus had come to set up a spiritual kingdom destined "to outlast the glories of imperial Rome;" come to proclaim peace on earth, good will to men; come to publish and exemplify in all His conduct and manner of life, the law of love and brotherly kindness; come to unlock and disclose the mysteries of the future world, and to answer questions which had hitherto for centuries puzzled and baffled the wisdom of the sages. Hence the most important event which occurred during the reign of Augustus was the birth of the Saviour.

**Virgil**, in one of his Eclogues, entitled "Pollio," and

dated 40 B. C., predicts the advent of a wondrous Child whose birth would be the dawn of a golden age of peace and happiness. Now, it may be that Virgil had heard of the Hebrew prophecies, since, at the time he wrote, Palestine was a part of the great Roman Empire, and he may have had his mind's eye fixed upon the Messiah when he composed the poem. The following is a passage from a poetical version of this poem :

#### EXTRACT FROM THE POLLIO.

“ Comes the Last Age of which the Sibyl sung—  
A new-born cycle of the rolling years;  
Justice returns to earth, the rule returns  
Of good King Saturn; lo! from the high heavens  
Comes a new seed of men. Lucina chaste,  
Speed the fair infant's birth, with whom shall end  
Our age of iron, and the golden prime  
Of earth return; thine own Apollo's reign  
In him begins anew. This glorious age  
Inaugurates, O Pollio, with thee;  
Thy consulship shall date the happy months;  
Under thine auspices the Child shall purge  
Our guilt-stains out, and free the land from dread.  
He with the gods and heroes like the gods  
Shall hold familiar converse, and shall rule  
With his great father's spirit the peaceful world.  
For thee, O Child! the earth untilled shall pour  
Her early gifts, the winding ivy's wreath,  
Smiling acanthus, and all flowers that blow.  
The ground beneath shall cradle thee in blooms,  
The venom'd snake shall die, the poisonous herb  
Perish from out thy path.”

—W. L. Collins.

Besides the Eclogues, or pastoral poems, Virgil is the author of the Georgics and the *Æneid*. The Georgics is a poetical work on husbandry. It directs the farmer how to plow, and sow, and reap; it teaches how to ren-

der the land fertile, and explains the signs of the weather. And much minute advice is given about the proper care and cultivation of the vineyard, the raising of cattle, and the management of bees. In this poem Virgil sings the praises of Italy, his native land, in a glowing eulogy.

“ Yet golden corn each laughing valley fills,  
The vintage reddens on a thousand hills,  
Luxuriant olives spread from shore to shore,  
And flocks unnumbered range the pastures o'er.

“ Here Spring perpetual leads the laughing hours,  
And Winter wears a wreath of summer flowers;  
The o'erloaded branch twice fills with fruits the year,  
And twice the teeming flocks their offspring rear.

“ All hail, Saturnian earth! hail, loved of fame,  
Land, rich in fruits, and men of mighty name!”

The Georgics is regarded as the most finished and original of Virgil's productions. He spent seven years in composing it, and then, after finishing it, he devoted the rest of his life, or eleven years, to writing the *Æneid* in fulfillment of a promise made to the Emperor that “he would wed Cæsar's glories to an epic strain.” The *Æneid*, like the *Odyssey*, is a sequel to Homer's *Iliad*, in which the origin of Rome is beautifully described, and the genealogy of Augustus is traced back to “the pious *Æneas*,” the greatest hero who survived the fall of ancient Troy.

In a celebrated passage the poet represents *Æneas* as visiting the lower world, where he meets his father's ghost, and learns from his lips the future of his race, while he beholds with excited wonder the pale and shad-

owy forms of men who are destined to shed glory on the Roman name. Among the spirit-throng he sees "Augustus Cæsar, god by birth," and the great Marcellus, "the Sword of Rome," who fought with Hannibal, and fell in the second Punic War. And there also, by the side of the distinguished Roman commander, he espies

"A youth full-armed, by none excelled  
In beauty's manly grace."

This splendid youth is introduced as "our own Marcellus," the Emperor's nephew and Octavia's son, a prince of bright promise, whose sudden and untimely death had stricken his friends with sorrow, and filled his mother's heart with inconsolable grief.

The eulogy upon this young man is one of the most touching tributes to be found in any language; and when, at the request of Augustus, Virgil recited the affecting passage before the royal family, the bereaved mother is said to have fainted quite away at the exceeding pathos of the lines. Virgil, no doubt, recited the verses with wonderful sweetness and propriety, as he is said to have received from the heart-broken parent the munificent reward of 10,000 sesterces, or about \$400 for each verse, amounting nearly to \$8,000 for the passage. The following is a version of this famous encomium upon

#### MARCELLUS.

"Seek not to know (the ghost replied with tears)  
The sorrows of thy sons in future years,  
This youth (the blissful vision of a day)  
Shall just be shown on earth, then snatched away.

The gods too high had raised the Roman state,  
Were but their gifts as permanent as great.  
What groans of men shall fill the Martian field!  
How fierce a blaze his flaming pile shall yield!  
What funeral pomp shall floating Tiber see,  
When, rising from his bed, he views the sad solemnity!  
No youth shall equal hopes of glory give,  
No youth afford so great a cause to grieve.  
The Trojan honor, and the Roman boast,  
Admired when living, and adored when lost!  
Mirror of ancient faith in early youth!  
Undaunted worth, inviolable truth!  
No foe, unpunished in the fighting field,  
Shall dare thee, foot to foot, with sword and shield!  
Much less in arms oppose thy matchless force,  
When thy sharp spurs shall urge thy foaming horse.  
Ah! couldst thou break through Fate's severe decree,  
A new Marcellus shall arise in thee!  
Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,  
Mixed with the purple roses of the spring:  
Let me with funeral flowers his body strow;  
This gift which parents to their children owe,  
This unavailing gift, at least I may bestow!"

*—Dryden.*

The *Æneid* abounds in beautiful thoughts, though in originality it is inferior to Homer's great Epic. Virgil's house at Rome stood on the Esquiline Hill, near the gardens of his friend Maecenas. It was comfortably furnished, and had an excellent library. Yet it is not strange that the poet, with his modest and retiring disposition, preferred the peace and quiet of a country home to the noise and confusion of a great capital.

Besides, his talents had gained him such popularity that whenever he appeared in public he was the object of general attention. On one occasion, "when some of his verses were recited in the theatre, the whole audience rose to salute Virgil, who was present, with the same

respect which they would have paid to the Emperor." During the latter years of his life, the poet resided at Naples, or near there, at a delightful villa which he owned. This was his favorite retreat, as he could here find shelter from public observation.

He died at the age of fifty, and just before his death he called for the *Æneid* to burn it, because he regarded it as an imperfect poem. Augustus, however, interposed and saved the work from the flames, to which the modesty of its author had consigned it. Virgil was buried at Naples in a simple vault, long since overgrown with ivy and wild myrtle, and marked by a marble slab set in the rock opposite. The Latin inscription upon it has been thus rendered :

"I sung flocks, tillage, heroes; Mantua gave  
Me life; Brundisium, death; Naples, a grave."

The poet bequeathed his fortune of \$400,000 to his brother, Augustus, Maecenas and other friends. Thus passed away a noble and virtuous man, eminent for purity of character, integrity, modesty, unselfishness, and filial piety.

## CHAPTER XV.

### A Few Other Distinguished Romans.

“Who, you all know, are honorable men.”—SHAKESPEARE.

#### **TIBERIUS, THE SECOND ROMAN EMPEROR.**

On the death of Augustus, Tiberius succeeded, without opposition, to the empire, and soon afterwards he began the practice of a wicked and sanguinary policy, which justly caused him to be thoroughly hated and feared. In order to avoid punishment for his crimes, he watched, circumvented, imprisoned and put to death, as far as possible, all the noble men of the state who would be likely to call him to account for his misdeeds. Persons were tried on a charge of high treason, grounded not upon actions but upon looks, words, and gestures, all of which were magnified into grievous offences against the majesty of the Emperor.

A system of espionage was organized, which destroyed social confidence and domestic security, inasmuch as a man's enemies were quite likely to be found among his own servants, or among the guests who were accustomed to sit at his table and enjoy his free bounty. The principle that the accused is to be regarded as innocent until he is proven guilty, had no place in the trials conducted

under the direction of Tiberius. On the contrary, those who were accused by the spies of the government every-where present, were at once suspected and presumed to be guilty; and corrupt judges were easily found to condemn them. Therefore confiscations and executions were every-day occurrences.

The rights of the people were trampled upon or dis-regarded. Tiberius chose the magistrates himself, abol-ished the assemblies, and thus swept away the last trace of popular liberty. Both in public and private life he was a monster of cruelty. With sleepless and devouring jealousy he sapped the strength of the state by shedding the best blood of Rome, and with implacable malice persecuted his own kindred.

At last he himself fell a victim to the rage and revenge of his enemies. He was murdered A. D. 31, by Caius, who, he had predicted, "would prove a serpent to swallow Rome, and a Phaethon to set the world on fire." Tibe-rius had some literary ability, and was said to be a crafty speaker. He was addicted to the practice of astrology, and, like Augustus, apprehensive of thunder, as a pre-servative against which he wore a laurel crown.

In his person he was tall and robust, broad in the shoulders, and so strong in the muscles that he could bore a hard apple with his finger, and wound the scalp of a boy with a fillip. His face was fair-complexioned, and would have been handsome if it had not been dis-figured by carbuncles, for which he used cosmetics. His eyes were prodigiously large, and could discern objects

in the dark ; he wore his hair long in the neck, contrary to the Roman usage ; walked erect with a stiff neck ; seldom accosted any one : and when he spoke, used a wave of the hand as in condescension.

The news of the tyrant's death was received at Rome with popular cries of "Tiberius to the Tiber!" His body, however, was burned with funeral rites.

It was during the reign of Tiberius that Christ was crucified.

**Caligula** succeeded to the empire on the death of Tiberius. Like his predecessor, he is notorious for his cruelty and vices.

He built his favorite horse a marble stable, placed in it an ivory manger, and had he not been prevented by death, he probably would have conferred upon the animal the honors of the consulship.

The soldiers nicknamed him Caligula, or "little shoe," from the fact that in his youth he wore little shoes like their own. On one occasion he became incensed at the people of Rome for some trivial reason, and exclaimed : "Would that the people of Rome had but one neck, so that I might behead them all at once."

Passing over the names of several emperors, we come to that of

**Vespasian**, who was crowned in 70, A. D. And it is quite a relief to find in him a good ruler among so many bad ones. He was distinguished for many noble and

commendable traits of character. He was affable, kind and firm, and he therefore reigned with great popularity.

“He was brave, and free from vice, an enemy to luxury, and devoid of personal or family pride.”

When dying, at the age of seventy years, he requested his attendants to lift him to his feet, saying that “an emperor should die standing.”

The *Colosseum* at Rome dates from the time of Vespasian. This is one of the largest structures ever erected by the hand of man, and though in ruins, much of it still remains as the proud and glorious monument of ancient grandeur.

It is said that Vespasian made his Jewish prisoners work for him gratuitously in the construction of this vast amphitheatre. It was dedicated about the year 80, A. D., and the people, struck with its immense proportions, called it the *Colosseum*. “At the inauguration under Titus, 5,000 wild beasts were put to death, and 11,000 on the occasion” of a grand victory over the Parthians. In the arena a little forest was planted, and therein were placed a thousand ostriches and a countless number of other animals.

For many years after the practice of celebrating the barbarous games for which the building was reared had been abandoned, it was used successively as a fortress and a hospital, and finally it served as a quarry from which the Farnese and others took the material to build their lofty and magnificent palaces. But one of the

popes, shocked at such wanton depredations, put an end to them by consecrating the building to the memory of the blessed martyrs who had been torn to pieces within it by wild beasts. The farther decay of the building was arrested by walls and buttresses of support.

The following is a description of the structure, translated from the French: "The oval arena, 260 feet long by 150 wide, had its two entrances situated at the two broad extremities of the circus. It was surrounded by gradually ascending steps, which formed seats for the spectators. On the first rank were placed at one side the box for the imperial family, and on the other, that of the consuls. Right and left were places reserved for ambassadors, first magistrates, senators, and other great dignitaries. The senators and equites occupied stalls of white marble, separated from the common people by a deeply cut division, forming a kind of fixed gulf between them. The amphitheatre terminated with a beautiful portico at the roof, formed of eighty marble columns. The Colosseum accommodated 90,000 spectators.

"Night is the time when one should contemplate the Colosseum, when a beautiful clear moonlight plays among the hollow vaults and on the broken steps, giving to what it lights up, and what it darkens with shadow, proportions more vast and shapes even stranger than their own. Then it is that the terrible scenes of the past crowd on the memory of the traveller."

"We imagine we see," says Chateaubriand, "the people assembling in the theatre of Vespasian; all Rome

gathered to drink the blood of the martyrs; a hundred thousand spectators, some shaded by the hems of their robes, others by umbrellas, crowding the seats; multitudes vomited forth, as it were, by the porticos, descending and ascending the long stairs and taking their places. Railings of gold ward off the senators' box from the attacks of the ferocious beasts. Ingenious machines scatter a perfumed spray throughout the vast space, cooling the air and making it pleasant. Three thousand statues in bronze, an endless multitude of pictures, columns of jasper and porphyry, balustrades of crystal, vases of the richest workmanship, dazzle the eye and lend variety to the scene. In a canal surrounding the arena swim a hippopotamus and crocodiles. Five hundred lions, forty elephants, and tigers, panthers, and bulls accustomed to the slaughter of human beings, rage and roar in the caverns of the amphitheatre; while here and there gladiators, not less ferocious, wipe their blood-stained arms."

It seems strange that any people could ever enjoy the sight of such base, cruel sports, and yet it is a historical fact that the early inhabitants of Rome did relish and even gloat over and glory in such bloody spectacles. They were monsters, simply monsters of cruelty and inhumanity, without a drop of pity in their hearts. Watch them as they lean over the galleries, all intent upon the fierce contest in the arena, and you will see every thumb turned down, voting the helpless victim to the death, not one of them willing to turn his hand over to

spare the poor martyr's life. And yet a respectable historian writes that Vespasian was "free from vice." The blood of the martyrs slain by his order or sanction, cries out from the ground of the Colosseum that he was an inhuman barbarian.

**Titus**, the son of Vespasian, succeeded to the throne in 79, A. D. Measured by the standards of his time, he was a brave and worthy man. He was called "the father of his people, the guardian of virtue, and the patron of liberty." Doubtless in some degree he merited the praises bestowed upon him. One anecdote which is related about him, is highly to his credit.

On recalling one evening that he had done no benevolent act during the day, he exclaimed: "My friends, I have lost a day."

Titus was the General who besieged and took Jerusalem, 70, A. D. Probably he himself "would have saved the holy place of the Temple as a wonder of the world, but a soldier threw a torch through a golden latticed window, and the flame spread rapidly."

**Domitian**, a brother of Titus, was the next emperor. And it would be difficult to find two persons belonging to the same family, and more unlike, than were these brothers. Domitian was a profligate scoundrel. Rome trembled when he obtained the crown. He was "indolent, voluptuous, cruel, malignant, suspicious."

"He was so much in the habit of catching flies and piercing them through with a bodkin for his amusement,

that one of his servants, being asked if any one was with the emperor, answered, 'Not even a fly.' ”

At another time he summoned his council before him at midnight, as if some very important business was to be transacted. Indeed, they all supposed that some great danger threatened the state.

They were, however, happily disappointed when they were told the reason for calling them together at that late and unseemly hour. The emperor simply wished to consult them as to whether an immense turbot, just caught, should be cut in pieces or have a special platter made for it. That was all.

John, the Christian Apostle and Evangelist, was banished to the Isle of Patnos during the reign of Domitian. And it was during his exile that he wrote the book of Revelation.

**Trajan** was crowned emperor in 98, A. D. The following are some of the expressions used to describe his conduct, appearance and character: “The greatest and most powerful, and one of the most virtuous of the Roman emperors. Celebrated for his affability, simplicity of manners, clemency, and munificence.” He was called “the best.” “Equally great as a ruler, a general, and a man.” “Of dignified appearance and commanding aspect.”

On presenting the sword to a chief military officer, he gave this remarkable charge: “Make use of it for me if I do my duty; if I do not, against me.”

He caused so many buildings to be erected, and had his name engraved upon them, that he was commonly called “a wall-flower.”

It was during his reign that the province of Dacia, across the Danube, was completely conquered. And for this conquest Trajan gratified the people by a celebration on a grand scale. No fewer than 10,000 gladiators fought for the amusement of the multitude. It was also to commemorate the Dacian conquest that Trajan’s famous column was erected in the forum at Rome. This pillar has often been excelled in height, but it would be hard to find one more perfect and beautiful in harmony of proportions. “Its pedestal is admirable, and the spiral figures in low relief, which twist around its shaft of white marble, have been studied with advantage by Raphael. For the pedestal, the shaft, the capital, and the statue of Trajan, Apollodorus of Damascus, the architect of Trajan’s Forum, employed thirty-four blocks of marble, marvellously fitted together. Throughout its whole length the column is pierced by a staircase leading to the summit. What forms the particular beauty of Trajan’s column is the unity of conception which it displays. Everything is varied, but there is no incoherency. Underneath, in the earth, was the golden urn that contained the ashes of Trajan ; and upon the pedestal, garlands of oak, symbolical of peace, were suspended. Laurels gird the base of the pedestal. The shaft is enriched with a kind of endless scroll, which winds round its circumference from base to summit. Here may

be beheld ascending, as it were, from the bottom to the top, 2,500 figures of soldiers and prisoners, with an endless number of horses, elephants, weapons and war-material. Standing on the top, the conqueror, as it were, looks down upon this triumphal cavalcade marching upward in winding file, and is recompensed for his victory. Above the tomb is the trophy ; above the trophy the apotheosis ; and—rare fortune for a monument—nothing jars upon the mind of the spectator in gazing at this great memorial ; for he remembers that Trajan deserved all the honors that were paid to him."

The column in the Place Vendôme, at Paris, erected to commemorate the victories of Napoleon, is a bronze reproduction of Trajan's column.

In the latter part of the third century a change in the form of Government was inaugurated by the Emperor Diocletian. There were to be two chief officers called Augusti, one to rule in the East and the other in the West ; and each Augustus was to have a subordinate officer called a Cæsar. And the Western Cæsar usually resided at Trier, or York, in Britain.

At the latter place, it is claimed by many historians that the first Christian emperor, **Constantine**, was born. His father was one of the Cæsars, and when he died there were no less than six claimants for the chief authority. Constantine finally succeeded in gaining supreme control. He built a new capital, which was named Constantinople in his honor. His mother, Helena,

restored the sacred places about Jerusalem, and built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and that of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

While marching on to Rome, Constantine saw a flaming cross in the sky, bearing the inscription in Greek, "By this conquer." And henceforth his troops marched under a standard whose top was adorned with a mystic X, representing at once the cross and the first letter of the Greek word for Christ.

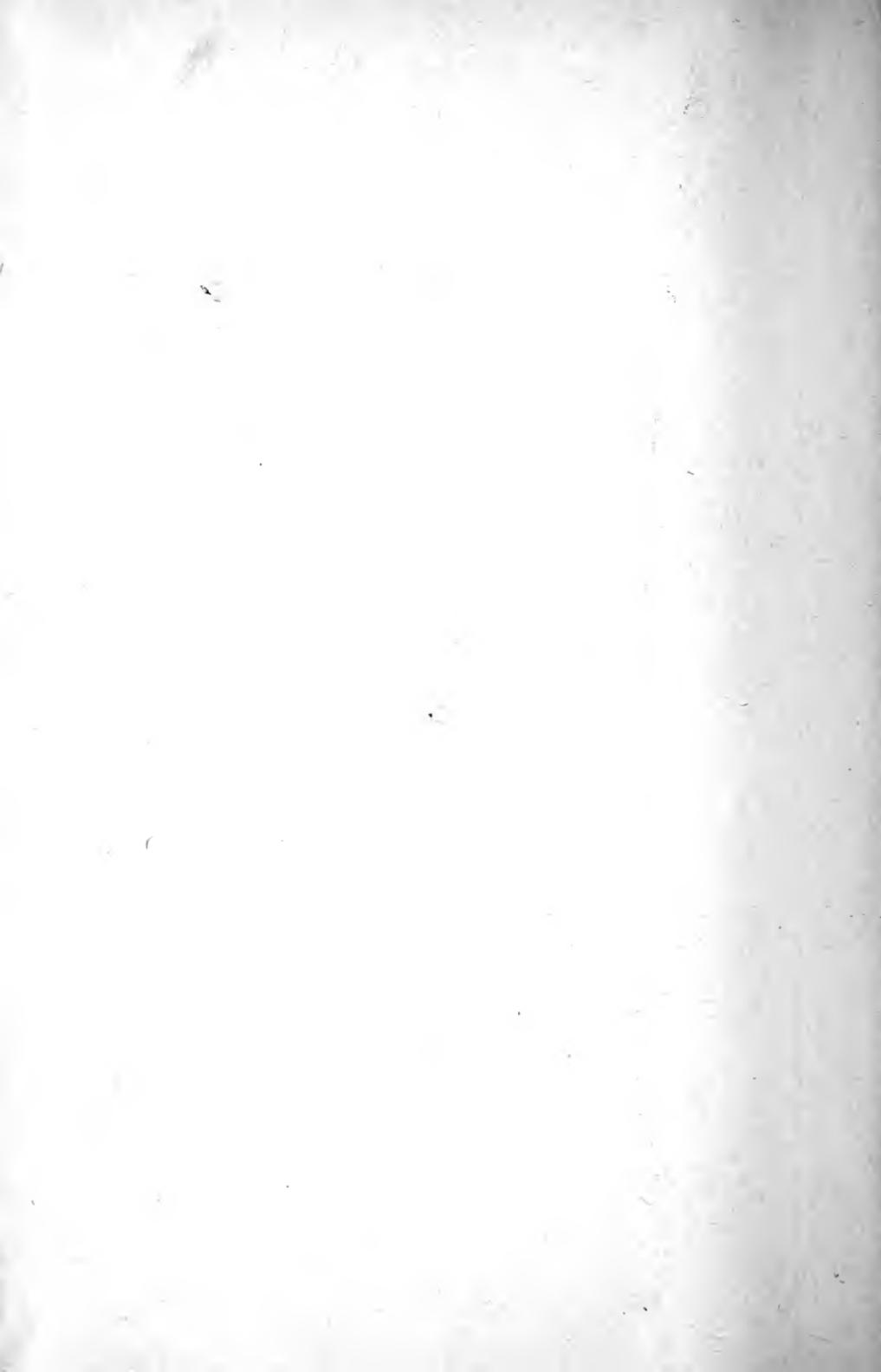
In religious controversies Constantine took an active and leading part. He summoned the first general council of bishops to meet at Nice, in Bithynia, and decide upon the case of Arius, who denied the divinity of Christ. It was here that the Nicene creed was framed and adopted. Arius was condemned and banished, but after three years the emperor revoked the sentence and restored him to his church at Alexandria.

Constantine's policy was marked by peculiar features. He scattered titles with an unsparing hand, adopting the oriental custom of piling up adjectives and nouns to form great swelling names of honor, such as "Illustrious," "Respectable," "Most Perfect," "Most Honorable," "Egregious," "Your Gravity," "Your Sublime and Wonderful Magnitude," or "Your Sincerity."

He taxed the people till a sum equal to forty million dollars was poured annually into his treasury. And he separated the military service from the civil government.

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